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TRAVELS

THROUGH

SYRIA AND EGYPT.

VOL. I.

TRAVELS

THROUGH

SYRIA AND EGYPT,

IN THE YEARS 1783, 1784, AND 1785.

CONTAINING

The preſent Natural and Political State of thoſe Countries, their Productions, Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce; with Obſervations on the Manners, Cuſtoms, and Government of the TURKS and ARABS.

ILLUSTRATED WITH COPPER PLATES.

BY M. C—F. VOLNEY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

THE SECOND EDITION.

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PREFACE.

OCTOBER, 1786.

FIVE years ago, being ſtill young, a ſmall inheritance, which fell to me, put me in poſſeſſion of a ſum of money. The difficulty was, how to employ it. Some of my friends adviſed me to enjoy the capital, others to purchaſe an annuity; but, on reflection, I thought the ſum too inconſiderable to make any ſenſible addition to my income, and too great to be diſſipated in frivolous expences. Some fortunate circumſtances had habituated me to ſtudy; I had acquired a taſte, and even a paſſion for knowledge, and this acceſſion to my fortune appeared to me a freſh means of gratifying my inclina-

tion, and opening a new way to improvement. I had read, and frequently heard repeated, that of all the methods of adorning the mind, and forming the judgment, travelling is the moſt efficacious; I determined, therefore, on a plan of travelling, but to what part of the world I ſhould direct my courſe remained ſtill to be choſen: I wiſhed the ſcene of my obſervations to be new, or at leaſt brilliant. My own country, and the neighbouring nations, ſeemed to me either too well known, or too eaſy of acceſs: the riſing States of America, and the ſavages, were not without their temptations; but other conſiderations determined me in favour of Aſia. Syria, eſpecially, and Egypt, both with a view to what they once have been, and what they now are, appeared to me a field equally adapted to thoſe political and moral obſervations with which I wiſhed to occupy my mind. "Thoſe are the coun-
"tries," ſaid I, "in which the greater part of
"the opinions that govern us at this day
"have had their origin. In them, thoſe
"religious ideas took their riſe, which have
"operated ſo powerfully on our private
"and

" and public manners, on our laws, and " our ſocial ſtate. It will be intereſting, " therefore, to be acquainted with the " countries where they originated, the cuſ- " toms and manners which gave them birth, " and the ſpirit and character of the nations " from whom they have been received as " ſacred: to examine to what degree this " ſpirit, theſe manners, and theſe cuſtoms, " are altered or retained; to aſcertain the " influence of climate, the effects of the " government, and the cauſes of the va- " rious habits and prejudices of theſe coun- " tries; in a word, to judge from their pre- " ſent ſtate, what was their ſituation in for- " mer times."

On the other hand, conſidering the political circumſtances of the Turkiſh empire, for the laſt twenty years, and reflecting on their poſſible conſequences, it appeared to me equally curious and uſeful to acquire correct notions of its internal government, in order to form a juſt eſtimate of its real power and reſources. With theſe views I ſet out for Egypt, about the end of 1782. After continuing ſeven months at Cairo,

finding too many obſtacles to a proper examination of the interior parts of the country, and too little aſſiſtance in learning Arabic, I determined to proceed into Syria. The more tranquil ſtate of that province correſponded better with my intentions. Eight months reſidence among the Druſes, in an Arabian convent, rendered the Arabic familiar to me, and enabled me to travel through all Syria during a whole year. On my return to France, after an abſence of near three years, imagining my reſearches might prove of ſome utility, I reſolved to publiſh a few obſervations on the preſent ſtate of Syria and Egypt; and I was confirmed in this reſolution by the difficulty attending travelling in thoſe countries, which have, therefore, but ſeldom been viſited, and are but imperfectly known. Travellers, in general, have directed their reſearches more to examine their antiquities, than their preſent ſituation; and almoſt all, haſtily paſſing through them, have been deficient in the two principal means of acquiring knowledge, time, and the language of the country. Without poſſeſſing the language, it is impoſ-

ſible

ſible to appreciate either the genius or the character of a nation. Interpreters can never ſupply the defect of a direct communication. And without continuing a ſufficient time, no traveller can form an accurate judgment, for the novelty of every thing around us naturally confounds and aſtoniſhes. The firſt tumult muſt ſubſide, and the objects which preſent themſelves be repeatedly examined, before we can be certain the ideas we have formed are juſt. To ſee well is an art which requires more practice than is commonly imagined.

On my return to France, I found that a late traveller * had anticipated me, with reſpect to *Egypt*, by a firſt volume of *Letters* on that country. He has ſince publiſhed two others; but, as the field is extenſive and fertile, there ſtill remain ſome novelties to glean; and on ſubjects already treated, the world may poſſibly not be averſe to hear two witneſſes.

Syria, though not leſs intereſting than Egypt, is undoubtedly a more novel ſubject. What has been already written on it by ſome

* M. Savary.

travellers, is now grown obſolete, and, at beſt, very imperfect. I had at firſt determined to relate only what I myſelf had ſeen; but, deſirous, for the ſatisfaction of my readers, to complete my deſcription of that province, I was unwilling to deprive myſelf of the obſervations of others, when, from what I had ſeen myſelf, I could not doubt their veracity.

In my relation, I have endeavoured to maintain the ſpirit with which I conducted my reſearches into facts; that is, an impartial love of truth. I have reſtrained myſelf from indulging any ſallies of the imagination, though I am no ſtranger to the power of ſuch illuſion over the generality of readers; but I am of opinion that travels belong to the department of hiſtory, and not that of romance. I have not therefore deſcribed countries as more beautiful than they appeared to me; I have not repreſented their inhabitants more virtuous, nor more wicked than I found them, and I have perhaps been enabled to ſee them ſuch as they really are, ſince I have never received from them either benefits or injuries.

As

As to the form of this work, I have not followed the method uſual in books of travels, though, perhaps, the moſt ſimple. I have rejected, as too prolix, both the order and the details of an itinerary, as well as all perſonal adventures; I have only exhibited general views, as better calculated to combine facts and ideas, and from a deſire of ſaving the time of the reader, amid the prodigious ſucceſſion of new publications. To render more clear my geographical obſervations on Egypt and Syria, I have annexed maps of thoſe two countries. That of Egypt, for the Delta, and the deſert of Sinai, is laid down from the aſtronomical obſervations of M. Niebuhr, who travelled for the King of Denmark, in 1761: they are the lateſt, and moſt accurate, yet publiſhed. The ſame traveller has afforded me great aſſiſtance in the map of Syria, which I have completed from that of Danville, and my own obſervations. To conclude, I have no doubt but the lovers of the ancient arts will thank me for accompanying with a drawing the deſcription I have given of the two moſt beautiful

beautiful remains of antiquity in Aſia, the Ruins of Palmyra, and thoſe of the Temple of the Sun at Balbec; and I have reaſon to believe that the admirers of the modern arts will ſee with pleaſure the execution of the two engraved plates of thoſe monuments.

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MAP of EGYPT.
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
SYRIA
Dead Sea
Jerusalem
Gaza
El Arish
DELTA
BEHAIRIA or PROV. OF THE SEA
SHARKIA or EASTERN PROV.
Cairo
Pyramids
Heliopolis
DESERT OF ARABIA
Route of the Pilgrims to Mecca
Sea of Kolzoum
Marbles
DESERT OF AFRICA
NILE
All this space is filled with barren Mountains
SAID or UPPER EGYPT
RED SEA
El Kosair
Ancient Thebes
Granites
French Leagues 25 to a degree

TRAVELS

IN

EGYPT AND SYRIA.

STATE OF EGYPT.

CHAP. I.

Of Egypt in general, and the City of Alexandria.

IT is in vain that we attempt to prepare ourſelves, by the peruſal of books, for a more intimate acquaintance with the cuſtoms and manners of nations; the effect of narratives upon the mind, will always be very different from that of objects upon the ſenſes. The images the former preſent, have neither correctneſs in the deſign, nor livelineſs in the colouring; they are always indiſtinct, and leave but a fugitive impreſſion, very eaſily effaced. This we more particularly experience, when we are ſtrangers to the objects to be laid before us; for the imagination, in that caſe, finding no terms of compariſon ready

formed, is compelled to collect and compose new ideas; and, in this operation, ill directed, and haſtily executed, it is difficult not to confound the traits, and disfigure the forms. Ought we then to be aſtoniſhed, if, on beholding the things themſelves, we are unable to diſcover any reſemblance between the originals and the copies, and if every impreſſion bears the character of novelty?

Such is the ſituation of a ſtranger who arrives, by ſea, in Turkey. In vain has he read hiſtories and travels; in vain has he, from their deſcriptions, endeavoured to repreſent to himſelf the aſpect of the countries, the appearance of the cities, the dreſſes, and manners of the inhabitants: he is new to all theſe objects, and dazzled with their variety: every idea he has formed to himſelf vaniſhes, and he remains abſorbed in ſurprize and aſtoniſhment.

No place is more proper to produce this effect, and prove the truth of this remark, than Alexandria in Egypt. The name of this city, which recalls to memory the genius of one of the moſt wonderful of men; the name of the country, which reminds us of ſo many great events; the picturesque appearance of the

the place itſelf; the ſpreading palm-trees; the terraced houſes, which ſeem to have no roof; the lofty ſlender minarets, all announce to the traveller that he is in another world. A variety of novel objects preſent themſelves to every ſenſe; he hears a language whoſe barbarous ſounds, and ſharp and guttural accents, offend his ear; he ſees dreſſes of the moſt unuſual and whimſical kind, and figures of the ſtrangeſt appearance. Inſtead of our ſmooth ſhaved faces, our ſide curls, our triangular hats, and our ſhort, and cloſe dreſſes, he views, with aſtoniſhment, tanned viſages, with beards and muſtachios, large rolls of ſtuff wreathed round their bald heads; long garments, which, reaching from the neck to the feet, ſerve rather to veil than clothe the body, pipes of ſix feet long, with which every one is provided, hideous camels, which carry water in leathern ſacks, and aſſes, ſaddled and bridled, which lightly trip along with their riders in ſlippers; he obſerves their markets ill ſupplied with dates, and round flat little loaves; a filthy drove of half ſtarved dogs roaming through the ſtreets, and a kind of wandering phantoms, which, under a long drapery of a ſingle piece, diſ-

cover nothing human, but two eyes, which ſhew that they are women. Amid this croud of unuſual objects, his mind is incapable of reflexion; nor is it until he has reached his place of reſidence, ſo deſirable on landing after a long voyage, that, becoming more calm, he reflects on the narrow, ill paved ſtreets, the low houſes, which, though not calculated to admit much light, are ſtill more obſcured by lattice work, the meagre and ſwarthy inhabitants, who walk bare-footed, without other clothing than a blue ſhirt faſtened with a leathern girdle, or a red handkerchief, while the univerſal marks of miſery, ſo manifeſt in all he meets, and the myſtery which reigns around their houſes, point out to him the rapacity of oppreſſion, and the diſtruſt attendant upon ſlavery.

But his whole attention is ſoon attracted by thoſe vaſt ruins which appear on the land ſide of the city. In our countries, ruins are an object of curioſity. Scarcely can we diſcover, in unfrequented places, ſome ancient caſtle, whoſe decay announces rather the deſertion of its maſter, than the wretchedneſs of the neighbourhood: in Alexandria, on the contrary, we no ſooner leave the New Town, than we are aſtoniſhed

aſtoniſhed at the ſight of an immenſe extent of ground overſpread with ruins. During a walk of two hours, you follow a double line of walls and towers, which form the circumference of the ancient Alexandria. The earth is covered with the remains of lofty buildings deſtroyed; whole fronts crumbled down, roofs fallen in, battlements decayed, and the ſtones corroded and disfigured by ſaltpetre. The traveller paſſes over a vaſt plain, furrowed with trenches, pierced with wells, divided by walls in ruins, covered over with ancient columns, and modern tombs, amid palm-trees, and nopals *(a)*, and where no living creature is to be met with, but owls, bats, and jackalls. The inhabitants, accuſtomed to this ſcene, behold it without emotion; but the ſtranger, in whom the recollection of ancient ages is revived by the novelty of the objects around him, feels a ſenſation, which not unfrequently diſſolves him in tears, inſpiring reflexions which fill his heart with ſadneſs, while his ſoul is elevated by their ſublimity.

I ſhall not here repeat the deſcriptions, given by all travellers, of the remarkable an-

(a) Vulgarly called *raquette*, the cochineal tree.

tiquities of Alexandria. The reader will find in Norden, Pocock, Niebuhr, and in the Letters lately publiſhed by M. Savary, every neceſſary detail on the baths of Cleopatra, the two obeliſks that bear her name, the catacombs, the reſervoirs, and the Pillar, improperly called Pompey's *(b)* Pillar. Theſe names are majeſtic; but the originals by no means correſpond with the figures we have ſeen of them. The pillar alone, from its loftineſs, its prodigious circumference, and the ſolitude with which it is ſurrounded, impreſſes a genuine ſentiment of reſpect and admiration.

At preſent, Alexandria is the emporium of a conſiderable commerce. It is the harbour for all the commodities exported from Egypt by the Mediterranean, except the rice of Damietta. The Europeans have eſtabliſhments there, where factors diſpoſe of their

(b) It ought for the future to be called the Pillar of Severus, ſince M. Savary has proved it was erected in honour of that Emperor. Travellers differ with reſpect to the dimenſions of this column; but the calculation the moſt generally admitted at Alexandria, makes the height of the ſhaft, with the capital, 96 feet, and the circumference 28 feet, 3 inches.

merchan-

merchandize by barter. Veſſels are conſtantly to be met with there from Marſeilles, Leghorn, Venice, Raguſa, and the dominions of the Grand Seignor; but it is dangerous to winter there. The new port, the only harbour for the Europeans, is clogged up with ſand, inſomuch that, in ſtormy weather, ſhips are liable to bilge; and, the bottom being alſo rocky, the cables ſoon chafe and part, ſo that, one veſſel driving againſt a ſecond, and that againſt a third, they are perhaps all loſt. Of this there was a fatal inſtance ſixteen or eighteen years ago, when two-and-forty veſſels were daſhed to pieces on the mole, in a gale of wind, from the north-weſt, and numbers have been ſince loſt there at different times. The old port, the entrance to which is covered by a neck of land called the Cape of Figs *(c)*, is not ſubject to this inconvenience; but the Turks admit no ſhips into it but thoſe of Muſſulmen. It will, perhaps, be aſked, in Europe, why do they not repair the New Port? The anſwer is, that, in Turkey, they deſtroy every thing, and repair nothing. The old harbour will be deſtroyed, likewiſe,

(c) Ras el-tin, pronounced *teen*.

as the ballaſt of veſſels has been continually thrown into it for the laſt two hundred years. The ſpirit of the Turkiſh government is to ruin the labours of paſt ages, and deſtroy the hopes of future times, becauſe the barbarity of ignorant deſpotiſm never conſiders to-morrow.

In time of war, Alexandria is of no importance; no fortification is to be ſeen; even the Pharos, with its lofty towers, cannot be defended. It has not four cannon fit for ſervice, nor a gunner who knows how to point them. The five hundred Janiſaries, who ſhould form the garriſon, reduced to half that number, know nothing but how to ſmoke a pipe. It is fortunate for the Turks that the Franks find their intereſt in preſerving this city. A ſingle Ruſſian or Malteſe frigate would ſuffice to lay it in aſhes; but the conqueſt would be of no value. A foreign power could not maintain itſelf there, as the country is without water. This muſt be brought from the Nile by the Kalidj, or canal of twelve leagues, which conveys it thither every year at the time of the inundation, and fills the vaults or reſervoirs dug under the ancient city, which muſt ſerve till the next year. It is evident,

evident, therefore, that were a foreign power to take poſſeſſion, the canal would be ſhut, and all ſupplies of water cut off.

It is this canal alone which connects Alexandria with Egypt; for, from its ſituation without the Delta, and the nature of the ſoil, it really belongs to the deſerts of Africa; its environs are ſandy, flat and ſterile, without trees and without houſes, where we meet with nothing but the plant *(d)* which yields the Kali, and a row of palm-trees, which follows the courſe of the *Kalidj* or canal.

We do not really enter Egypt until we arrive at Roſetta, called by the natives *Raſhid:* there the ſands peculiar to Africa end, and a black, fat, and loamy ſoil, the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of Egypt, begins: there, alſo, for the firſt time, we behold the waters of the celebrated Nile, which, rolling between two ſteep banks, conſiderably reſembles the Seine between Auteuil and Paſſy. The woods of palm-trees, on each ſide, the orchards, watered by its ſtreams, the lemon, the orange, the banana, the peach, and other trees, by their perpetual verdure, render Roſetta aſtoniſhingly delightful,

(d) Glaſs-wort, called by the Arabs *el-kali*, from whence the name of the ſalt *al-kali*.

and

and its beauties appear ſtill more charming by its contraſt with Alexandria, and the ſea we have juſt left; and from hence to Cairo, every object tends to increaſe the effect.

As we aſcend the river we begin to acquire ſome general idea of the ſoil, the climate, and productions of this celebrated country. Nothing more reſembles its appearance than the marſhes of the lower Loire, or the plains of Flanders; inſtead however of the numerous trees and country houſes of the latter, we muſt imagine ſome thin woods of palms and ſycamores, and a few villages of mud-walled cottages, built on artificial mounds. All this part of Egypt is ſo level, and ſo low, that we are not three leagues from the coaſt when we firſt diſcover the palm-trees, and the ſands on which they grow; from thence, as we proceed up the river, the declivity is ſo gentle, that the water does not flow faſter than a league an hour. As for the proſpect of the country, it offers little variety; nothing is to be ſeen but palm-trees, ſingle, or in clumps, which become fewer in proportion as you advance: wretched villages of mud-walled huts, and a boundleſs plain, which at different ſeaſons is an ocean of freſh water, a miry

miry moraſs, a verdant field, or a duſty deſart; and on every ſide an extenſive and foggy horizon, where the eye is wearied and diſguſted; till at length, towards the junction of the two branches of the river, the mountains of Grand Cairo are diſcovered in the eaſt, and to the ſouth-weſt, three detached maſſes appear, which, from their triangular form, are known to be the Pyramids. We now enter a valley which turns to the ſouthward, between two ridges of parallel eminences. That to the eaſt, which extends to the Red Sea, merits the name of a mountain from the ſteepneſs of its aſcent, and that of a deſart from its naked and ſavage aſpect *(e)*; but the weſtern is nothing but a ridge of rock, covered with ſand, which has been very properly termed a natural mound, or cauſeway. To deſcribe Egypt in two words, let the reader imagine, on one ſide, a narrow ſea and rocks; on the other, immenſe plains of ſand, and, in the middle, a river flowing through a valley of one hundred and fifty leagues in length, and from three to ſeven wide, which, at the diſtance of thirty leagues from the ſea, ſeparates into two arms, the branches of

(e) Called in Arabic *mokattam*, or *hewn mountain*.

which

which wander over a country where they meet no obſtacles, and which is almoſt without declivity.

The prevailing taſte for natural hiſtory, now, to the honour of the preſent age, become ſo general, demands doubtleſs ſome details on the nature of the ſoil, and the minerals of this extenſive country. But, unfortunately, the manner of travelling here is ill adapted to favour ſuch reſearches. It is not the ſame in Turkey as in Europe: with us, travels are agreeable excurſions; there, they are difficult and dangerous undertakings, eſpecially for Europeans, whom the ſuperſtitious natives believe to be ſorcerers, come to diſcover by magic, treaſures which the Genii have concealed under the ruins. This ridiculous, but deep rooted opinion, added to perpetual wars and diſturbances, deprives the traveller of ſecurity, and prevents every diſcovery. No one dares even walk alone in the fields; nor can he procure any body to accompany him. We are confined therefore to the banks of the river, and a route frequented by every one, which can afford no new information. It is only by comparing what we have ſeen ourſelves with the obſervations

vations made by others that ſome general ideas can be acquired.

After having made this compariſon, we ſhall find reaſon to conclude that the baſis of all Egypt, from Aſouan, (the ancient Syene) to the Mediterranean, is a continued bed of calcareous ſtone, of a whitiſh hue, and ſomewhat ſoft, containing ſhells analogous to thoſe found in the two neighbouring ſeas *(f)*. This quality is diſcoverable in the Pyramids, and in the Lybian rock on which they ſtand. The ſame kind of ſtone is likewiſe to be found in the Ciſterns, in the Cátacombs of Alexandria, and in the projecting ſhelves upon the coaſt. We alſo find it in the Eaſtern mountain, in the latitude of Cairo, and the materials with which that city is built. It is this calcareous ſtone, in ſhort, which forms the immenſe quarries that extend from Sawadi to Manfalout, for the ſpace of upwards of twenty-five leagues, according to the teſtimony of Father Sicard. That miſſionary informs us, alſo, that marble is found in the

(f) Theſe ſhells conſiſt principally of echini, volutes, bivalves, and a ſpecies in the form of lentils. See Shaw's Travels.

valley

valley of *Carts (g)*, at the foot of the mountains bordering on the Red Sea, and in the mountains to the north-eaſt of Aſouan. Between that place and the Cataract are the principal quarries of red granite; but there muſt be others lower down, for, on the oppoſite ſhore of the Red Sea, the mountains of Oreb, of Sinaï, and their dependencies *(h)*, at two days journey towards the north, are formed of it. Not far from Aſouan, to the north-weſt, is a quarry of ſerpentine ſtone, employed in its native ſtate by the inhabitants to make veſſels which will ſtand the fire. And, in the ſame parallel, on the Red Sea, was formerly a mine of emeralds, all traces of which are now loſt. Copper is the only metal of this country mentioned by the ancients. The road to Suez is the part of it where the greateſt quantity of what are called Egyptian flints, or pebbles, is found, though the bottom be of a calcareous ſtone, hard and ſonorous; there likewiſe thoſe ſtones are found, which, from their form, have been taken for petrified

(g) See Savary's Letters, Vol. I. page 437.

(h) The former is grey, ſpotted with black, and ſometimes red:

wood.

wood. In fact, they do reſemble logs cut ſlanting at the ends, and full of ſmall holes, and might eaſily be taken for petrefactions; but chance throwing in my way a conſiderable quantity of theſe, in the road of the Haouatat Arabs *(i)*, I carefully examined them, and am convinced they are real minerals *(k)*.

The two lakes of Natron, deſcribed by Father Sicard, are more intereſting objects; they are ſituated in the deſart of Shayat, or St. Macarius, to the weſt of the Delta. Their bed is a ſort of natural trench, three or four leagues long, by a quarter wide, the bottom of which is hard and ſtony. It is dry for nine months in the year, but, in winter, there oozes from the earth a water of a reddiſh violet colour, which fills the lake to the height of five or ſix feet; the return of the great heats cauſing this to evaporate, there remains a bed of ſalt two feet thick, and very hard, which is broken with

(i) Each tribe has its particular road, to avoid diſputes.

(k) Beſides, there do not exiſt ten trees in this deſart, and it ſeems incapable of producing any.

bars

bars of iron. Thirty thouſand quintals are procured from them every year. This phenomenon, which indicates a ſoil impregnated with ſalt, is common throughout all Egypt. In every part of it, on digging, a brackiſh water is found, containing natron, marine ſalt, and a little nitre. Even when the gardens are overflowed, for the ſake of watering them, the ſurface of the ground, after the evaporation and abſorption of the water, appears glazed over with ſalt; and this ſoil, like that of the whole continent of Africa and Arabia, ſeems either to be compoſed of ſalt, or to produce it.

In the midſt of theſe minerals of various qualities, in the midſt of that fine and reddiſh coloured ſand peculiar to Africa, the earth of the valley through which the Nile flows, diſcovers properties which prove it of a diſtinct claſs. Its blackiſh colour, its clayey, cementing quality, demonſtrate its foreign origin; and, in fact, it is brought by the river from the heart of Abyſſinia; as if Nature had determined artfully to form an habitable iſland in a country to which ſhe had denied every thing. Without this fat and

and light mud, Egypt never could have produced any thing; that alone seems to contain the seeds of vegetation and fecundity: and these again are owing to the river, by which it is deposited.

CHAP. II.

Of the Nile, and the enlargement of the Delta.

THE whole phyſical and political exiſtence of Egypt depends upon the Nile; that alone provides for the greateſt neceſſity of animal life, the want of water, ſo frequently, and ſo diſtreſsfully, experienced in warm climates. The Nile alone, without the aid of rain, every where ſupplies vegetation with moiſture, the earth, during the three months inundation, imbibing a ſufficient quantity of water for the reſt of the year. Were it not for this overflowing, only a very ſmall part of the country could be cultivated, and even that would require prodigious labour; it is with reaſon, therefore, this river has been ſtiled the ſource of plenty, of happineſs, and of life itſelf. Had Albuquerque, the Portugueſe, been able to execute his project, of turning its courſe from Ethiopia into the Red

Red Sea *(l)*, this country, now ſo rich, would have become a ſavage deſert, ſurrounded by ſolitudes. When we reflect on the uſe man makes of his powers, how little reaſon have we to regret that Nature has granted him no more!

It is with reaſon, therefore, that the Egyptians have always profeſſed, and ſtill retain, a religious veneration for the Nile *(m)*; but an European muſt be pardoned, if, on hearing them boaſt its beauty, he ſmiles at their ignorance. Never will theſe troubled and muddy waters have for him the charm of tranſparent fountains and limpid ſtreams; never, except from ſome extraordinary excitement, will a ſwarthy Egyptian woman, driping from theſe yellow and muddy waters, remind him of the bathing Naiads. For ſix months of the year the water of the river is ſo thick that it muſt have time to ſettle be-

(l) See Savary's Letters. T.

(m) They called it *holy*, *bleſſed*, *ſacred*; and, on the appearance of the new waters, that is, on the opening of the canals, mothers are ſeen plunging their children into the ſtream, from a belief that theſe waters have a purifying and divine virtue, ſuch as the antients attributed to every river.

fore it can be drunk *(n)*: and, during the three months which precede the inundation, reduced to an inconſiderable depth, it grows heated, becomes green, fœtid, and full of worms, and it is neceſſary to have recourſe to that which has been before drawn and preſerved in ciſterns. At all times, people of delicacy take care to perfume it, and cool it by evaporation *(o)*.

Travellers and Hiſtorians have written ſo much on the Nile, and its phænomena, that

(n) Bitter almonds are made uſe of, for this purpoſe, with which the veſſel is rubbed, and the water then becomes really light and good. But nothing but thirſt, or prejudice, could induce any perſon to give it the preference to that of our fountains and large rivers, ſuch as the Seine, and the Loire.

(o) Earthen veſſels, unglazed, are kept carefully in every apartment, from whence the water continually tranſpires; this tranſpiration produces the more coolneſs in proportion as it is more conſiderable; for which reaſon, theſe veſſels are often ſuſpended in paſſages where there are currents of air, and under the ſhade of trees. In ſeveral parts of Syria they drink the water which has tranſpired; in Egypt they drink that which remains; beſides, in no country is ſo much water uſed. The firſt thing an Egyptian does, on entering a houſe, is to lay hold of the *kolla*, (the pitcher of water) and take a hearty draught of it; and, thanks to their perpetual perſpiration, they feel no inconvenience from the practice.

I was

I was at firſt inclined to think the ſubject exhauſted; but, as ideas vary reſpecting the moſt invariable facts; frequently, while there remains nothing new to ſay, there is ſtill ſomething to correct. Such appears to me to be the caſe, with ſome opinions of M. Savary, in the Letters he has lately publiſhed. The poſitions he endeavours to eſtabliſh concerning the enlargement, and riſe of the Delta, are ſo different from the concluſions I have deduced from the facts and authorities he quotes that I think it my duty to ſubmit our contradictory opinions to the tribunal of the public. This diſcuſſion ſeems to me the more neceſſary, as a reſidence of two years, upon the ſpot, gives a weight to the teſtimony of M. Savary, which would ſoon become authority: let us ſtate the queſtions, and treat, in the firſt place, of the extenſion, or enlargement of the Delta.

A Greek hiſtorian, to whom we are indebted for almoſt all our knowledge of ancient Egypt, and whoſe authority every day's obſervation confirms, wrote thus, two-and-twenty centuries ago: "That part of Egypt "frequented by the Greeks, (the Delta) is an "acquired land, the gift of the river, as is all

" the marſhy country, along its banks, for " three days ſail up the Nile *(p)*."

The reaſons he alleges in ſupport of this aſſertion prove that it was not founded on prejudice. " In fact," adds he, " the ſoil of " Egypt, which is a black and fat mud, is " abſolutely different, both from that of " Africa, which is a red ſand, and that of " Arabia, which is clayey and ſtoney.—This " mud is brought from Ethiopia, by the " Nile.—And the ſhells found in the deſert " ſufficiently prove that the ſea formerly " extended farther into the country."

Herodotus, however, though he admits this encroachment of the river, ſo conformable to probability, has not determined its proportions. Theſe M. Savary has imagined himſelf able to ſupply; let us examine his reaſoning.

" While it encreaſed it height, Egypt *(q)*, ſays he, " augmented in length likewiſe; " to prove which, among ſeveral facts which " hiſtory has preſerved, I ſhall ſelect only " one. During the reign of Pſammeticus,

(p) Herodot. lib. 2. p. 105. edit. Weſling.

(q) See Letters on Egypt, Vol. I. p. 17. of the Engliſh Tranſlation, Second Edit.

" the

" the Mileſians, with thirty ſhips, landed at " the mouth of the Bolbitine branch, at " preſent the branch of Roſetta, where they " fortified themſelves, and built a city, " which they called Metelis, (Strabo, lib. 17.) " now named Faoüa, but which, in the " Coptic vocabularies, is ſtill called Meſſil. " This city, which was formerly a ſea-port, " ſtands, at preſent, nine leagues from the " ſhore; which ſpace the Delta has length- " ened, from the age of Pſammeticus to the " preſent."

Nothing ſo accurate at firſt ſight as this reaſoning; but, on recurring to the original, M. Savary's authority, we find, that the principal fact is wanting; the following is a literal tranſlation of the text of Strabo *(r)*.

" Beyond the Bolbitine mouth, is a low " ſandy cape, called the horn of the Lamb, " which ſtretches pretty far (into the ſea); " beyond that, the watch-tower of Perſeus, " and the wall of the Mileſians; for the " Mileſians, in the reign of Cyaxares, King " of the Medes, cotemporary with Pſamme- " ticus, King of Egypt, arriving at the Bol-

(r) Strabonis Geograph. Interp. Caſaubon. Edit. 1707. Lib. 17. p. 1153.

" bitine mouth, with thirty veſſels, landed " there, and erected the work which bears " their name. Some time after, having ad- " vanced into the Saitic Nome, and van- " quiſhed Inarus, in a naval battle, they " founded the city of Naucratis, a little above " Schedia. Beyond the wall of the Mile- " ſians, as we approach the Sebennytic " mouth, are lakes, one of which is named " the Butic."

Such is the paſſage of Strabo, relative to the Mileſians; no mention is made of Metelis, of which not even the name is to be found in his whole work. Danville *(s)* has copied it from Ptolemy, who does not aſcribe it to the Mileſians: and unleſs M. Savary can prove the identity of Metelis, and the Mileſian wall, by reſearches made upon the ſpot, his concluſions ought not to be admitted.

He is of opinion, too, that Homer affords him a ſimilar teſtimony in thoſe paſſages wherein he ſpeaks of the diſtance of the iſle of Pharos from Egypt *(t)*; the reader ſhall

(s) See the excellent Memoir of Danville, on Egypt, in 4to. 1765, p. 77.

(t) See Savary's Letters, p. 17.

judge,

judge, whether this is better founded. I quote the tranſlation of Madame Dacier *(u)*, which, though leſs brilliant, is more literal than any other, and our buſineſs is with the literal. Menelaus is made to ſpeak thus:

" In the Egyptian ſea, oppoſite the Nile, " there is a certain iſland, called Pharos; diſ- " tant from one of the mouths of that river " about as far as a veſſel can ſail in one day " before the wind."—and, ſoon after, Proteus ſays to Menelaus: " Inflexible deſtiny does " not permit you to reviſit your dear coun- " try—until you ſhall have returned again " into the river Egyptus, and offered un- " blemiſhed hecatombs to the immortals."

" He ſaid," reſumes Menelaus, " and my " heart was ſeized with grief and ſadneſs, be- " cauſe this God commanded me to return " into the river Egyptus, the way to which " is difficult and dangerous."

From theſe paſſages, and eſpecially from the former, M. Savary would infer that the Pharos, which, at preſent joins the main land, was at that time very remote from it; but when Homer ſpeaks of the diſtance of this

(u) Odyſſ. lib. 4.

iſland,

iſland, he does not mean its diſtance from the ſhore oppoſite, as that traveller has tranſlated him, but from the land of Egypt, and the river Nile. In the ſecond place, by a day's ſail, we muſt not underſtand the indefinite ſpace, which the veſſels, or, more properly ſpeaking, the boats, of the ancients could paſs through in a day; the Greeks uſed this expreſſion to denote a certain fixed diſtance of five hundred and forty ſtadia. Herodotus *(x)*, who clearly aſcertains this fact, gives us an example of it, when he ſays that the Nile has encroached upon the ſea the whole extent of country for three days ſail up the river; and the ſixteen hundred and twenty ſtadia, ariſing from this computation, agree with the more accurate meaſure of fifteen hundred ſtadia, which he gives us in another place, as the diſtance of Heliopolis from the ſea. Now, taking, with Danville, the five hundred and forty ſtadia for twenty-ſeven thouſand toiſes, or near half a degree *(y)*, we ſhall find this meaſure is the diſtance of the Pharos from the Nile; it extends exactly to two-thirds of a league above Roſetta, a ſituation where we

(x) Herod. lib. 11. p. 106 and 107.

(y) This is only 1,300 toiſes too much.

have

have reaſon to place the city which gave name to the Bolbitine mouth; and it is remarkable that it was this which the Greeks frequented, and where the Mileſians landed, a century and a half after Homer. It is, therefore, far from being proved, that the increaſe of the Delta, or of the Continent, was ſo rapid as has been imagined; and, if we were diſpoſed to maintain it, we ſhould ſtill have to explain how this ſhore, which has not gained half a league from the days of Alexander, ſhould have gained eleven in the far ſhorter period from the time of Menelaus to that conqueror *(z)*.

A more ſatisfactory eſtimate of this encroachment might have been deduced from the dimenſions of Egypt, given by Herodotus: the following are his words. "The

(z) It may be objected Homer is not exact when he ſays the Pharos was oppoſite the Nile; but, in his excuſe, it may be urged, that when he calls Egypt the extremity of the world, he cannot mean to ſpeak with preciſion. We muſt alſo obſerve, that the Canopic branch ran formerly by the lakes, opening itſelf a paſſage near Aboukir; and if, as the view of the country leads me to think, it paſſed even to the weſt of Aboukir, which muſt have been an iſland, Homer, might ſay, with reaſon, that the Pharos was oppoſite the Nile.

" breadth of Egypt, along the ſea-coaſt, from " the Gulph of Plinthine, to the Lake Ser- " bonis, near Mount Caſius, is three thou- " ſand ſix hundred ſtadia; and its length, " from the ſea to Heliopolis, fifteen hundred " ſtadia."

Let us confine ourſelves to this laſt meaſure, which alone concerns the preſent diſpute. Danville has proved, with that ſagacity which was peculiar to him, that the ſtadium of Herodotus is equivalent to between fifty and fifty-one French toiſes; and taking it at the latter eſtimation, the fifteen hundred ſtadia are equal to ſeventy-ſix thouſand toiſes, which, after the rate of fifty-ſeven thouſand to a degree, gives one degree and near twenty minutes and a half. Now, from the aſtronomical obſervations of M. Niebuhr, who travelled for the King of Denmark, in 1761 *(a)*, the difference of latitude between Heliopolis, (now called Matarea) and the ſea, being one degree twenty-nine minutes, at Damietta, and one degree twenty-four at Roſetta, there is a difference, on one ſide, of

(a) See *Voyage en Arabie*, by C. Niebuhr, in 4to. tom. 1. which muſt be diſtinguiſhed from his *Deſcription de l'Arabie*; 2 vol. in 4to.

three minutes and a half, or a league and a half encroachment; and eight minutes and a half, or three leagues and a half, on the other; that is to say, the ancient shore answers to eleven thousand eight hundred toises below Rosetta, which corresponds very nearly to the sense in which I understand the passage in Homer, while, on the branch of Damietta, it falls nine hundred and fifty toises below that city. It is true that, in measuring immediately on the map, the line of the shore will be found about three leagues higher on the side of Rosetta, and falls on Damietta itself, which is occasioned by the angle produced by the difference of longitude. But, in that case, Bolbitinum, mentioned by Herodotus, is not within its prescribed limits; and it is no longer true that Busiris (Abousir) was situated, as Herodotus has told us *(b)*, in the middle of the Delta. It must not be denied that the relations of the ancients, and the knowledge we have of the country, are not sufficiently precise exactly to determine the successive encroachments.

(b) Lib. ii. p. 123.

In

In order to reaſon accurately, reſearches ſimilar to thoſe of the Comte de Choiſeul, on the Meander *(c)*, would be neceſſary; the ground ſhould be dug into, but ſuch labours require means and opportunities which few travellers poſſeſs; and a greater difficulty than all is, that the ſandy ſoil, which forms the lower Delta, undergoes great changes every day. Theſe are not entirely owing to the Nile and the ſea; the wind itſelf is a very powerful agent, which ſometimes choaks up the canals, and drives back the river, as it has done at the Canopic branch. At others, it amaſſes the ſand, and buries the ruins, ſo that their very remembrance is loſt. M. Niebuhr relates a remarkable inſtance of this. While he was at Roſetta, in 1762, he diſcovered, by chance, under the ſandy hillocks, to the ſouthward of that city, ſeveral ancient ruins, and, among others, twenty fine marble columns of Grecian workmanſhip, without being able to learn any tradition even of the name of the place *(d)*. This appears to me to have been the caſe with the

(c) See Voyage Pittoreſque de la Grèce, tom. 2.

(d) This ſituation agrees very well with that of Bolbitinum.

whole

whole of the adjacent desert. This tract, formerly intersected by large canals, and filled with towns, presents nothing but hillocks of a yellowish sand, very fine, which the wind heaps up at the foot of every obstacle, and which frequently buries the palm-trees; wherefore, notwithstanding the industrious researches of Danville, we cannot be certain he is right in the situations he has assigned to several ancient places.

M. Savary has been much more exact in what he has cited concerning one of the changes the Nile has undergone *(e)*, by which it appears, that river formerly flowed entirely through Lybia, to the south of Memphis. But the relation of Herodotus himself, on whose authority this depends, is not without difficulties. When that historian, therefore, asserts, after the priests of Heliopolis, that Menes, the first king of Egypt, dammed up the elbow, formed by the river, two leagues and a quarter (one hundred stadia) above Memphis *(f)*, and dug a new channel, to the eastward of that city, does it not follow that Memphis was at that time situated in

(e) Letter i. p. 12.

(f) Herodot. ii. lib. 2.

a barren

a barren deſert, far diſtant from any water? And how improbable is ſuch an hypotheſis! Can we literally believe in theſe immenſe works of Menes, who is ſuppoſed to have founded a city which is mentioned as exiſting before his time; who is imagined to have dug canals and lakes, thrown bridges over rivers, and erected palaces, towers and temples; and all this in the earlieſt age of the nation, and the infancy of all the arts? Is not this Menes himſelf an hiſtorical chimæra, and are not all the relations of the prieſts, concerning this remote antiquity, wholly mythological? I am inclined to think therefore, that the turning the courſe of the Nile, by Menes, was no more than a diverſion of ſome ſmaller branch, to increaſe the inundation of the Delta; and this conjecture ſeems the more probable, ſince, notwithſtanding the teſtimony of Herodotus, this part of the valley, ſeen from the Pyramids, preſents nothing which could have been an obſtruction to the courſe of the river. Beſides, I cannot but think that M. Savary preſumes too much, when he makes the great channel, called *bahr bela ma*, or river without water, terminate at the mound before-

before-mentioned, above Memphis, and ſuppoſes it to have been the ancient bed of the Nile. Every traveller, cited by Danville, places that termination at the Lake of Fayoum, of which it appears a more natural continuation *(g)*. To have proved this poſition, he ſhould have viſited the places themſelves, and I never heard, at Cairo, that M. Savary advanced farther to the ſouthward, than the Pyramids of Djiza. The formation of the Delta, which he deduces from this alteration, is equally repugnant to probability; for, in this ſudden change, why ſhould we imagine, the "enormous weight of the "waters, diſcharging themſelves into this "gulph *(h)*, would repel thoſe of the ſea?" The meeting of two maſſes of fluid produces nothing but a mixture, from which a common level ſoon reſults; if we imagine the water increaſed, we can only expect that more land will be covered. It is true,

(g) In fact, we ſhall be more inclined, from an inſpection of the map, to believe that this was the ancient courſe of the river: as for the petrefactions of maſts and whole veſſels, mentioned by Father Sicard, theſe, to gain credit, ought to be atteſted by more enlightened travellers than that miſſionary.

(h) Letters on Egypt, vol. I. page 13.

M. Savary adds, " the ſand and mud car-
" ried along by the Nile, were accumulated,
" and the Delta, very inconſiderable at firſt,
" roſe from the ſea, by encroaching on its
" limits." But how does an iſland riſe out of the ſea? Running waters level much more than they heap up. This leads us to the queſtion of the elevation.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the Riſe of the Delta.

HERODOTUS, on whoſe authority this hypotheſis is founded, has not very ſatisfactorily explained the fact, but he has a paſſage of which M. Savary has availed himſelf to draw certain poſitive concluſions; the following is his reaſoning:

" In the time of Mœris, who lived five " hundred years before the Trojan war *(i)*, " eight cubits were ſufficient to overflow the " whole Delta *(Herodot. lib.* 2.); fifteen " were neceſſary in the age of Herodotus; " under the Roman empire, ſixteen; under " the Arabs, ſeventeen: eighteen cubits is " the ſtandard of abundance at this day; and " the Nile ſometimes riſes to two-and-twenty. " Thus, in the ſpace of 3284 years, we " ſee the Delta has riſen fourteen cubits."

True, if we admit the facts as they are ſtated; but, on a careful examination, we

(i) Letter I. p. 13.

ſhall find circumſtances which invalidate both the premiſes and concluſion. Let us firſt cite the text of Herodotus:

"The Egyptian prieſts," ſays that author *(p)*, "report that in the reign of King "Mœris, the Nile inundated the Delta, if it "only roſe to eight cubits. At preſent it does "not overflow it unleſs it attain ſixteen, or "at leaſt fifteen. Now, from the death of "Mœris to this time, nine hundred years "have not yet elapſed."

Let us calculate from theſe materials.

From Mœris to Herodotus - 900 years,
From Herodotus to the year 1777,
two thouſand two hundred and
thirty-ſeven, or if he will - 2,240

Total, - 3,140

Why this difference of one hundred and forty-four years exceſs in the calculation of M. Savary? Why does he uſe other numbers than thoſe of his author? But let us paſs over the chronology.

In the time of Herodotus, ſixteen cubits were neceſſary, or at leaſt fifteen, to overflow

(p) Lib. ii. p. 109.

the

the Delta. The ſame number was ſufficient in the time of the Romans: fifteen and ſixteen are invariably the meaſure.

"Before the time of Petronius," ſays Strabo *(q)*, "plenty was not known in the Del-
"ta unleſs the Nile roſe to fourteen cubits.
"But this Governor obtaining by art what
"nature denied, under his prefecture, plenty
"has been known at twelve." The Arabs tell us the ſame. A book in Arabic ſtill exiſts which contains a table of all the riſings of the Nile, from the firſt year of the Hegira (A. D. 622), down to the year 875, (A. D. 1470); and this work aſcertains that, in the lateſt times, as often as the Nile has fourteen cubits depth in its channel, there is a harveſt ſufficient for the year; that, if it reaches ſixteen, there is ſufficient for two years; but when it falls ſhort of fourteen, or exceeds eighteen, famine enſues; which correſponds exactly with the account of Herodotus. The book I quote is Arabic, but its contents are in every one's hands, who chooſes to conſult the word *Nile* in the Bibliotheque Orientale of D'Herbelot, or the Extracts from Kalkaſendas, in Dr. Shaw's Travels.

(q) Lib. xvii.

Nor is the meaſure of theſe cubits uncertain. Fréret, Danville, and M. Bailli have proved that the Egyptian cubit, being invariably twenty-four digits, is equal to twenty and a half French inches *(r)*; and the preſent cubit, called *Draa maſri*, is preciſely divided into twenty-four digits, and contains twenty and a half of our inches. But the columns with which the riſe of the Nile is meaſured, have undergone an alteration which we muſt not omit to notice.

" In the earlier ages, and while the Arabs " governed Egypt," ſays *Kalkaſendas*, " they " perceived that when the Nile did not at- " tain the ſtandard neceſſary for plenty, every " one was anxious to lay in ſufficient pro- " viſion for the year, which occaſioned great " inconveniencies. Complaints of this were " made to the Caliph Omar, who gave orders " to Amrou to enquire into the matter; and " he reported as follows:—Having made " the reſearches you commanded, we have " found that when the Nile riſes to fourteen

(r) I have meaſured ſeveral of them with a *pied de Roi*, *ſtandard foot* of copper; but I found they all varied from one to three lines. The *Draa ſtambouli* is of twenty-eight digits, or twenty-four inches, wanting one line.

" cubits,

" cubits, it produces a ſufficient harveſt for " the year; when it attains ſixteen cubits, " we have plenty; but that at twelve and " eighteen dearth enſues. We alſo find that " the cuſtom of making known the height " of the waters by proclamation, is produc- " tive of many irregularities, and is very " diſadvantageous to commerce."

Omar, to remedy this abuſe, was, perhaps, inclined to aboliſh theſe proclamations; but that not being practicable, he deviſed an expedient, ſuggeſted by Aboutaaleb, to produce the ſame effect. Until then the meaſuring column, called the *Nilometer (s)*, had been divided into cubits of twenty-four digits each; Omar ordered this to be deſtroyed, and ſubſtituting another in its place, which he erected in the iſland of Raouda, he commanded that the twelve lower cubits ſhould conſiſt of twenty-eight digits, inſtead of twenty-four, while the upper remained of the uſual number; hence, when the riſe of the Nile appeared, by the column, to be twelve cubits, it was really fourteen; for theſe twelve cubits being each four digits too long, there

(s) In Arabic, *Mekias*, or *Meaſure*.

was an exceſs of forty-eight digits, or two cubits. Therefore, when fourteen cubits, the meaſure of a ſufficient harveſt, were proclaimed, the inundation was really at the height for plenty, and the multitude, always eaſily deceived by words, never ſuſpected the impoſition. But this alteration could not eſcape the Arabian hiſtorians, who tell us the columns of the Said, or Upper Egypt, continued to be divided by twenty-four digits; that the height of eighteen cubits (old ſtyle), was always injurious; and that nineteen was very rare, and almoſt a prodigy *(t)*.

Nothing therefore is leſs certain than the progreſſive changes here alleged, and which are rendered improbable by a known fact, which is, that in the long period of eighteen centuries, the riſe of the Nile never varied. How does it happen then that it is ſo different at preſent? How can it ſo ſoon have altered

(t) Dr. Pocock, who has ſeveral good obſervations on the Nile, has entirely miſtaken the meaning of the text of Kalkaſendas; from an obſcure paſſage he has been led to conclude, that the Nilometer, in the time of Omar, was only twelve cubits, and this error has led him into a number of falſe conjectures. *Pocock's Travels*, vol. 1. 253.

from

from fifteen to twenty-two cubits, ſince the year one thouſand four hundred and ſeventy-three? This problem is, in my opinion, eaſy of ſolution; not from phyſical changes, but from other circumſtances. It is not the Nile but the column and meaſures which have varied. The myſtery in which the Mekias is enveloped by the Turks, has prevented the greater part of travellers from diſcovering the truth; but Pococke, who obtained a ſight of it in 1739, relates that the ſcale of cubits was inaccurate and unequal. He even obſerves it appeared to him to be new, a circumſtance which may lead us to imagine the Turks, in imitation of Omar, have made ſome recent alteration. In ſhort there is a fact which removes every doubt, for M. Niebuhr *(u)*, whom the world would not eaſily ſuſpect of falſehood or miſtake, having meaſured, in 1762, the marks of the inundation, on a wall at Djiza (Giza), found that, on the firſt of June, the Nile had fallen twenty-four French feet. But twenty-four feet, reduced to cubits, at the rate of twenty inches and a half each, give preciſely fourteen cubits one inch. It is true there

(*u*) *Voyage en Arabie*, tom. I. p. 102.

ſtill

ſtill remains eighteen days decreaſe; but by eſtimating that at half a cubit, agreeable to what has been obſerved by Pococke *(x)*, we have only fourteen cubits and a half, which correſponds exactly with the antient calculation.

There is another aſſertion of M. Savary's to which, likewiſe, I cannot ſubſcribe without reſtriction.—" Since I have been in *Egypt*," ſays he, Letter I. p. 15, " I have twice " made the tour of the Delta; I have even " croſſed it by the canal of Menouf. The " river, though full to the brim, in the great " branches of Roſetta and Damietta, and " thoſe which run through the interior parts " of the country; only overflowed the " land where it lay low, or where banks had " been raiſed to ſtop its waters, and throw " them over the rice fields." Hence he concludes, " that the preſent poſition of the " Delta is the beſt poſſible for agriculture; " ſince, ceaſing to be overflowed, this iſland " has a yearly gain of the three months dur-

(x) The 17th of May, eleven pikes (or cubits) of the column were above the water, and the 3d of June eleven and a half: in ſeventeen days therefore there was a difference of half a cubit. *Pocock's Travels*, vol. I. p. 256.

" ing

" ing which the Thebais is inundated." It muſt be confeſſed that nothing can be more extraordinary than this gain. If the Delta has gained by being no longer overflowed, why was the inundation at all times ſo anxiouſly deſired? " This is ſupplied by " the banks." But the Delta muſt not be compared to the marſhes of the Seine. The water is only on a level with the land towards the ſea; every where elſe it is below the level, and the ſhore riſes as we aſcend the river. In ſhort, if I may give my teſtimony, I muſt declare that, when I went from Çairo to Roſetta, by the canal of Menouf, I obſerved, on the 26th, 27th, and 28th of September, 1783, that, notwithſtanding the waters had decreaſed upwards of a fortnight, the country was ſtill partly under water, and ſtill diſcovered, in the places left dry, the traces of the inundation. What M. Savary obſerved can, therefore, only be attributed to an indifferent inundation; nor ought we to imagine, either that the riſing has changed the ſtate of the Delta *(y)*, or that the Egyptians can have no water but

(y) The bed of the river itſelf has riſen, like the reſt of the country.

what

what is procured by artificial means, as expenſive as inſufficient (z).

It now remains for us to explain the difficulty of the eight cubits in the time of Mœris; and I cannot help thinking this ariſes from cauſes of the ſame nature. It appears that, ſubſequent to this Prince, an alteration took place in the meaſures of the country, and one cubit was made into two. This conjecture is the more probable ſince, in the time of Mœris, Egypt was not united into one kingdom; there were at leaſt three between Aſouan and the ſea. Seſoſtris, who was poſterior to Mœris, conquered and united them. But, after this Prince, they were again divided, and this diviſion ſubſiſted till the reign of Pſammeticus. Such a change in the meaſures of Egypt accords perfectly with the character of Seſoſtris, who effected a general revolution in the government, eſtabliſhed new laws, and a new adminiſtration, raiſed mounds

(z) In the lower Delta, the country is watered by the means of ſingle wheels, becauſe the water is on a level with the land; but in the upper Delta, it is neceſſary to apply chain-buckets to the wheels, or raiſe the water by moveable pumps. There is a great number on the road from Roſetta to Cairo, and it is ſufficiently evident this laborious method produces no great effect.

and

and cauſeways, on which to build villages and towns, and dug ſo great a number of canals, according to Herodotus *(a)*, that the Egyptians laid aſide uſing wheel-carriages, which they had till then employed.

It will be proper likewiſe to obſerve, that the degrees of inundation are not the ſame through all Egypt. On the contrary, a gradual diminution obtains as the river approaches the ſea. At Aſouan (Syene), the overflow is more conſiderable, by one ſixth, than at Grand Cairo; and, when the depth of water, at this latter city, is twenty-ſeven feet, it is ſcarcely four at Roſetta and Damietta. The reaſon of this is, that beſides the quantity of water abſorbed by the grounds, as it flows, the river, confined in one ſingle bed, and within a narrow valley, riſes higher in the upper country; whereas, when it has paſſed Cairo, being no longer obſtructed by the mountains, and ſeparating into a thouſand

(a) Herodotus, lib. 2. This circumſtance has greatly embarraſſed our modern chronologiſts, who place Seſoſtris before Moſes, in whoſe time chariots ſtill ſubſiſted in Egypt; but it is not the fault of Herodotus if his ſyſtem of chronology, the beſt of all antiquity, has not been underſtood.

branches,

branches, it neceſſarily loſes in depth what it acquires in ſurface.

The reader will conclude, doubtleſs, from what I have ſaid, that writers have flattered themſelves too much in ſuppoſing they could fix the preciſe limits of the enlargement and riſe of the Delta. But, though I would reject all illuſory circumſtances, I am far from denying the fact to be well founded; it is too plain from reaſon, and an examination of the country. The riſe of the ground appears to me demonſtrated by an obſervation on which little ſtreſs has been laid. In going from Roſetta to Cairo, when the waters are low, as in the month of March, we may remark, as we go up the river, that the ſhore riſes gradually above the water; ſo that, if it overflowed two feet at Roſetta, it overflows from three to four at Faoua, and upwards of twelve at Cairo *(k)*. Now, by reaſoning from this fact, we may deduce the proof of an increaſe by ſediment; for the layer of mud being in proportion to the thickneſs of the ſheets of

(k) It would be curious to aſcertain in what proportion it continues up to Aſouan. Some Copts whom I have interrogated on the ſubject, aſſured me that it was much higher through all the Said than at Cairo.

water by which it is depoſited, muſt be more or leſs conſiderable as theſe are of a greater or leſs depth; and we have ſeen that the like gradation is obſervable from Aſouan to the ſea.

On the other hand, the increaſe of the Delta manifeſts itſelf in a ſtriking manner, by the form of Egypt, along the Mediterranean. When we conſider its figure on the map, we perceive, that the country, which is in the line of the river, and evidently formed of foreign materials, has aſſumed a ſemi-circular ſhape, and that the ſhores of Arabia and Africa, on each ſide, have a direction towards the bottom of the Delta, which manifeſtly diſcovers this country was formerly a gulph, that, in time, has been filled up.

This accumulation is common to all rivers, and is to be accounted for in the ſame manner in all: the rain water, and the ſnow, deſcending from the mountains into the vallies, hurry inceſſantly along with them the earth they waſh away in their deſcent. The heavier parts, ſuch as pebbles and ſands, ſoon ſtop, unleſs forced along by a rapid current. But when the waters meet only with a fine and light

light earth, they carry away large quantities with the greateſt facility. The Nile meeting with ſuch a kind of earth, in Abyſſinia, and the interior parts of Africa, its waters are loaded, and its bed filled with it; nay, it is frequently ſo embarraſſed with this ſediment, as to be ſtraightened in its courſe. But, when the inundation reſtores to it its natural force, it drives the mud that has accumulated towards the ſea, at the ſame time that it brings down more for the enſuing ſeaſon; and this, arrived at its mouth, heaps up, and forms ſhoals, where the declivity does not allow ſufficient action to the current, and where the ſea produces an equilibrium of reſiſtance. The ſtagnation, which follows, occaſions the groſſer particles, which till then had floated, to ſink, and this takes place more particularly in thoſe places where there is leaſt motion, as toward the ſhores, till the ſides become gradually enriched by the ſpoils of the upper country, and of the Delta itſelf; for, if the Nile takes from Abyſſinia, to add to the Thebais, it likewiſe takes from the Thebais to give to the Delta, and from the Delta to carry to the ſea. Wherever its waters have a current, it deſpoils the ſame territory

territory it enriches. As we aſcend toward Cairo, when the river is low, we may obſerve on each ſide the banks worn ſteep, and crumbling in large flakes. The Nile, which undermines them, depriving their light earth of ſupport, it falls into the bed of the river, for when the water is high, the earth imbibes it; and when the ſun and drought return, cracks and moulders away in great flakes, which are hurried along by the Nile. Thus are ſeveral canals choaked up, and others enlarged, while the bed of the river continually riſes. This is the caſe with the moſt frequented of theſe at preſent, I mean that which runs from Nadir to the branch of Damietta. This canal, at firſt dug by the hand of man, is in ſeveral places become as wide as the Seine. It ſupplies even the mother branch, which runs from Batn-el-Bakara to Nadir, and which is filling up ſo faſt, that if it be not ſpeedily cleanſed, it will ſoon become firm ground: the reaſon of this is, that the river tends perpetually to the right line, in which it has the greateſt force; wherefore it has preferred the Bolbitine, which was at firſt but an artificial canal, to the Canopic branch *(c)*.

(c) Herodot. lib. 11.

From this mechaniſm of the river, it further reſults that the principal encroachment muſt be formed in the line of the moſt conſiderable mouths, and of the ſtrongeſt current; and the aſpect of the country is conformable with this theory. If we caſt our eye on the map, we ſhall perceive that the projection of the lands is chiefly in the direction of the branches of Roſetta and Damietta. The lateral and intermediate country entirely conſiſts of lakes and moraſſes between the Continent and the ſea, becauſe the ſmall canals, which terminate there, have only been able to produce an imperfect accumulation; for this mud and ſediment cauſe a very ſlow riſe: nor would this indeed ever ſuffice to elevate them above the water, without the addition of a more powerful agent, which is the ſea, that perpetually raiſes the level of the low banks above its own waters. For the waves, beating on the ſhore, repel the ſand and mud which they meet; their daſhing afterwards accumulates that ſlender bank, and gives it an elevation which it never would have attained in ſtill waters. The truth of this is manifeſt to every perſon who has ever obſerved the ſea, on a low and changing ſhore; but the ſea muſt have no current

current on the beach: for if it loſes in thoſe parts where it is in eddy, it gains in thoſe where it is in motion. When the ſhoals are at length formed on the level of the water, human induſtry ſoon endeavours their improvement. But inſtead of ſaying it raiſes their level above the water, we ought to ſay, it ſinks the level of the water, ſince the canals which are excavated collect, in narrow channels, thoſe waters which were ſpread over a great extent of ground *(d)*.

There remain unqueſtionably many obſervations to make, or to reconſider, in this country; but, as I have already ſaid, they are attended with great difficulties, to overcome which, much time, expence, and addreſs are neceſſary; and in many reſpects, the acceſſary obſtacles are even more inſuperable than the fundamental. Baron de Tott experienced the truth of this very lately, with reſpect to the Nilometer. In vain did he endeavour to ſeduce the guardians; in vain did he give

(d) The great number of canals may be the cauſe of variation in the degrees of the inundation; for if there be many, and thoſe deep ones, the water will run off quicker, and riſe leſs; if there be few, and thoſe ſhallow, the contrary will happen.

and promiſe ſequins to the cryers, in order to obtain the true heights of the Nile; their contradictory reports proved either their deceit, or their univerſal ignorance. It will be obſerved, perhaps, that meaſuring columns might be erected in private houſes; but ſuch experiments, ſimple in theory, are impoſſible in practice: they would expoſe to too ſerious dangers. Even the curioſity natural to the Franks, every day renders the Turks more jealous. They are perſuaded we have formed deſigns on their country; and the invaſions of the Ruſſians, added to popular prejudice, ſtrengthens their ſuſpicions. It is generally believed, at this moment, throughout their empire, that the predicted hour is arrived, when the power and religion of the Muſſulmen are about to be deſtroyed, and that the *Yellow King* is coming to eſtabliſh a new empire, &c. &c. But it is time to reſume our ſubject.

I paſs ſlightly over the ſeaſon *(e)* of the inundation, which is ſo well known; its

(e) It is fixed preciſely to the 19th of June, but it would be difficult to determine the firſt inſtant of it ſo exactly as the Copts wiſh to do.

inſen-

inſenſible increaſe, ſo unlike the ſudden ſwelling of our rivers; its diverſities, according to which it is ſometimes feeble, ſometimes ſtrong, and ſometimes even entirely fails; a very rare caſe, but of which two or three inſtances have happened: all theſe particulars are too well known to be repeated. It is known likewiſe that the cauſes of this phenomenon, which were an enigma to the ancients *(f)*, are no longer ſo to the Europeans. Since travellers have informed them that Abyſſinia and the adjacent part of Africa, are deluged with rain in May, June, and July, they have, with reaſon, concluded, that it muſt be theſe rains, which, by the ſituation of the country, abounding with a thouſand rivers, collect together in the ſame valley, direct their courſe to diſtant ſhores, and preſent the ſtupendous ſight of a maſs of water, which employs three months in draining off. We leave to Grecian naturaliſts their action of the northerly or Eteſian winds, which, by a pretended preſſure, ſtayed the courſe of the river; it is aſtoniſhing

(f) Democritus, however, had conjectured the true cauſe. See Diodorus Siculus, lib. 11.

that even they ſhould ever have admitted this explication, for the wind, acting only on the ſurface of the water, can never prevent the inferior maſs from obeying the laws of gravity. In vain have ſome moderns alleged the example of the Mediterranean, which, from the continuance of eaſterly winds, leaves dry the coaſt of Syria, a foot, or a foot and a half, to gain as much on thoſe of Spain and Provence, on which weſterly winds have a contrary effect; there is no compariſon to be made between a ſea without declivity, and a river; between the vaſt ſurface of the Mediterranean, and that of the Nile; between twenty-ſix feet and eighteen inches.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Winds and their Phænomena.

THE northerly winds, which blow at ſtated periods every year, anſwer a more certain and effectual purpoſe; that of carrying into Abyſſinia a prodigious quantity of clouds. From the month of April to July we ſee theſe inceſſantly aſcending towards the ſouth, and might be ſometimes tempted to expect rain from them; but this parched country requeſts in vain from them a benefaction which it is to receive under a different form. Never does it rain in the Delta in ſummer, and but rarely, and in ſmall quantities, during the whole courſe of the year. The year 1761, obſerved by M. Niebuhr, was an extraordinary caſe, which is ſtill frequently mentioned. The accidents occaſioned by the rains in Lower Egypt, in which a number of villages, built with earth, crumbled to pieces, afford a ſufficient proof that this abundance of water is there looked upon as very rare. It muſt be obſerved likewiſe, that it rains

ſtill leſs as you aſcend towards the Said. Thus, rain is more frequent at Alexandria and Roſetta than at Cairo, and at Cairo than at Miniah, and is almoſt a prodigy at Djirdja. As for us, the inhabitants of humid countries, we cannot conceive how it is poſſible for a country to ſubſiſt without rain *(g)*; but in Egypt, beſides the quantity of water which the earth imbibes at the inundation, the dews which fall in the ſummer might ſuffice for vegetation. The water-melons afford a remarkable proof of this; for though they have frequently nothing under them but a dry duſt, yet their leaves are always freſh. Theſe dews, as well as the rains, are more copious towards the ſea, and leſs conſiderable in proportion to their diſtance from it; but differ from the latter by being more abundant in ſummer than in winter. At Alexandria, after ſunſet, in the month of April, the clothes expoſed to the air,

(g) When rain falls in Egypt and in Paleſtine, there is a general joy among the people: they aſſemble together in the ſtreets, they ſing, are all in motion, and ſhout, *ya allah! ya mobarek!* that is to ſay, O God! O Bleſſed! &c.

and

and the terraces are ſoaked with them, as if it had rained. Like the rains, again, theſe dews are more or leſs plentiful, according to the prevailing wind. The ſoutherly and the ſouth-eaſterly produce none; the north wind a great deal, and the weſterly ſtill more. Theſe varieties are eaſily explained, by obſerving that the two former proceed from the deſerts of Africa and Arabia, which afford not a drop of water; while the northerly and weſterly winds, on the contrary, convey over Egypt the vapours from the Mediterranean, which the firſt croſſes, and the other traverſes lengthways. I find, even, on comparing my obſervations on this ſubject in Provence, in Syria, and in Egypt, with thoſe of M. Niebuhr in Arabia and at Bombay, that this relative poſition of the ſeas and continents is the cauſe of the various qualities of one and the ſame wind, which produces rain in one country, while it is invariably dry in another; a remark which deranges not a little the ſyſtems of both ancient and modern aſtrologers reſpecting the influence of the planets.

Another phenomenon, no leſs remarkable, is the periodical return of each wind, and its appropriation, if I may uſe the expreſſion, to certain

certain ſeaſons of the year. Egypt and Syria preſent, in this reſpect, a regularity worthy of attention.

In Egypt, when the ſun approaches the tropic of Cancer, the winds, which before blew from the eaſt, change to the north, and become conſtant in that point. In June they always blow from the north and north-weſt; this therefore is the proper ſeaſon for going up the Levant, and a veſſel may expect to anchor in Cyprus, or at Alexandria, the fourteenth, nay, ſometimes the eleventh day, after her departure from Marſeilles. The winds continue northerly in July, but vary ſometimes toward the weſt, and ſometimes toward the eaſt. About the end of July, during all the month of Auguſt, and half of September, they remain conſtantly in the north, and are moderate; briſker in the day, however, and weaker at night. At this period an univerſal calm reigns on the Mediterranean, ſo that ſhips would be ſeventy or eighty days in returning to France.

Towards the end of September, when the ſun repaſſes the line, the winds return to the eaſt; and, though not fixed, blow more regularly from that than any other point, except

except the north. Veſſels avail themſelves of this ſeaſon, which laſts all October and part of November, to return to Europe; and the run to Marſeilles is from thirty to five-and-thirty days. As the ſun approaches the other tropic, the winds become more variable and more tempeſtuous; they moſt uſually blow from the north, the north-weſt, and weſt, in which points they continue during the months of December, January, and February, which is the winter ſeaſon in Egypt, as well as with us. The vapours of the Mediterranean, condenſed by the coldneſs of the atmoſphere, deſcend in miſts and rains. About the end of February and in March, when the ſun returns towards the equator, the winds are more frequently ſoutherly than at any other ſeaſon. During this laſt month, and that of April, the ſouth-eaſterly, ſouth, and ſouth-weſterly winds prevail; and at times the weſt, north, and eaſt; the latter of which becomes the moſt prevalent about the end of April; and during May it divides with the north the empire of the ſea, and renders the paſſage to France ſtill more expeditious than at the other equinox.

Of the hot Wind, or Kamſin.

The ſoutherly winds, of which I have been ſpeaking, are known in Egypt by the general name of *winds of fifty (days) (h)*; not that they laſt fifty days without intermiſſion, but becauſe they prevail more frequently in the fifty days preceding and following the equinox. Travellers have mentioned them under the denomination of *poiſonous* winds *(i)*; or, more correctly, *hot winds of the deſert*. Such, in fact, is their quality; and their heat is ſometimes ſo exceſſive, that it is difficult to form any idea of its violence without having experienced it; but it may be compared to the heat of a large oven at the moment of drawing out the bread. When theſe winds begin to blow, the atmoſphere

(h) In Arabic, *kamſin*; but the *k* repreſents the Spaniſh *jota*, or the German *ch*.

(i) The Arabs of the deſert call them *ſemoum*, or poiſon; and the Turks *ſhamyela*, or wind of Syria, from which is formed the *Samiel* wind. (Baron de Tott tranſlates this word the *wind of Damaſcus*, which is the capital of Syria. See alſo Note *(c)* to Chapter I. of our author's account of Syria, where *el Sham* is ſaid to be the Arabic name of the city of Damaſcus. T.)

aſſumes

aſſumes an alarming aſpect. The ſky, at other times ſo clear, in this climate, becomes dark and heavy; the ſun loſes his ſplendour, and appears of a violet colour. The air is not cloudy, but grey and thick, and is, in fact, filled with an extremely ſubtle duſt, which penetrates every where. This wind, always light and rapid, is not at firſt remarkably hot, but it increaſes in heat in proportion as it continues. All animated bodies ſoon diſcover it, by the change it produces in them. The lungs, which a too rarefied air no longer expands, are contracted, and become painful. Reſpiration is ſhort and difficult, the ſkin parched and dry, and the body conſumed by an internal heat. In vain is recourſe had to large draughts of water; nothing can reſtore perſpiration. In vain is coolneſs ſought for; all bodies in which it is uſual to find it, deceive the hand that touches them. Marble, iron, water, notwithſtanding the ſun no longer appears, are hot. The ſtreets are deſerted, and the dead ſilence of night reigns every where. The inhabitants of towns and villages ſhut themſelves up in their houſes, and thoſe of the deſert in their tents, or in pits they dig in the earth, where they

they wait the termination of this deſtructive heat. It uſually laſts three days, but if it exceeds that time it becomes inſupportable. Woe to the traveller whom this wind ſurprizes remote from ſhelter; he muſt ſuffer all its dreadful conſequences, which ſometimes are mortal. The danger is moſt imminent when it blows in ſqualls, for then the rapidity of the wind encreaſes the heat to ſuch a degree, as to cauſe ſudden death. This death is a real ſuffocation; the lungs being empty, are convulſed, the circulation diſordered, and the whole maſs of blood driven by the heart towards the head and breaſt; whence that hæmorrhage at the noſe and mouth which happens after death. This wind is eſpecially fatal to perſons of a plethoric habit, and thoſe in whom fatigue has deſtroyed the tone of the muſcles and the veſſels. The corpſe remains a long time warm, ſwells, turns blue, and is eaſily ſeparated; all which are ſigns of that putrid fermentation which takes place in animal bodies when the humours become ſtagnant. Theſe accidents are to be avoided, by ſtopping the noſe and mouth with handkerchiefs; an efficacious method likewiſe is that practiſed by the camels, which bury their noſes

noſes in the ſand, and keep them there till the ſquall is over.

Another quality of this wind is its extreme aridity; which is ſuch, that water ſprinkled on the floor evaporates in a few minutes. By this extreme dryneſs, it withers and ſtrips all the plants, and, by exhaling too ſuddenly the emanations from animal bodies, criſps the ſkin, cloſes the pores, and cauſes that feveriſh heat which is the invariable effect of ſuppreſſed perſpiration.

Theſe hot winds are not peculiar to Egypt; they blow likewiſe in Syria; more frequently, however, near the ſea, and in the deſert, than on the mountains. M. Niebuhr met with them in Arabia, at Bombay, and in the Diarbekir: they are alſo known in Perſia, in the reſt of Africa, and even in Spain; every where their effects are ſimilar, but their direction varies according to the ſituation of the country. In Egypt, the moſt violent proceed from the ſouth-ſouth-weſt; at Mecca, from the eaſt; at Surat, from the north; at Baſſora, from the north-weſt; from the weſt at Bagdad; and in Syria from the ſouth-eaſt. Theſe varieties, which ſeem embarraſſing at firſt ſight, on reflection, furniſh the means

means of ſolving the enigma. We find, on examination, that theſe winds always proceed from deſert continents; and, in fact, it is natural that the air which covers the immenſe plains of Lybia and Arabia, meeting there neither with rivulets, nor lakes, nor foreſts, but ſcorched by the rays of a burning ſun, the violence of which is ſtill more increaſed by the reflection of the ſand, ſhould acquire a prodigious degree of heat and aridity; and if any cauſe intervenes to ſet it in motion, it cannot but carry with it the deſtructive qualities it has imbibed; it is ſo true that theſe qualities are owing to the action of the ſun upon the ſands that theſe ſame winds produce not the ſame effects at every ſeaſon. In Egypt, for example, I am aſſured, that the ſoutherly winds in December and January are as cold as thoſe from the north; and the reaſon of this is, that the ſun, having reached the ſouthern trophic, no longer burns up the northern parts of Africa, and that Abyſſinia, which is extremely mountainous, is covered with ſnow. The ſun muſt approach the equator to produce theſe phenomena. From a ſimilar reaſon, the ſouth wind has much leſs effect in Cyprus, where it arrives cooled by the vapours of the Mediterranean.

That

That from the north poſſeſſes its characteriſtic qualities in this iſland, where the inhabitants complain that its heat is inſupportable in ſummer, while it is freezing cold in winter; which evidently ariſes from the ſtate of Aſia Minor, which in ſummer is burnt up, and in winter covered with ice. In fact, this ſubject offers a multitude of problems, calculated to excite the curioſity of the naturaliſt.—Would it not, for inſtance, be intereſting to know,

1ſt, Whence proceeds this connection of the ſeaſons, and the progreſs of the ſun, with the various winds, and the points from whence they blow?

2dly, Why, throughout the Mediterranean, does the wind moſt frequently blow from the north, inſomuch, that we may ſay it continues in that point nine months out of twelve?

3dly, Why do the eaſterly winds return ſo regularly after the equinoxes; and why are the winds, in general, higher at this period?

4thly, Why are the dews more abundant in ſummer than in winter; and why, ſince the clouds are cauſed by the evaporation of

the ſea, and that evaporation is more copious in ſummer than in winter, why, notwithſtanding, are there more clouds in winter than in ſummer?

5thly, In ſhort, why is rain ſo rare in Egypt, and why do the clouds rather collect in Abyſſinia?

But it is time to complete our obſervations on the phyſical ſtate of this country.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the Climate and Air.

THE climate of Egypt is, with reaſon, eſteemed extremely hot, ſince in July and Auguſt, Reaumur's thermometer ſtands, in the moſt temperate apartments, at 24 and 25 degrees above the freezing point*. In the Said, it riſes ſtill higher, though I can aſſert nothing preciſe in that reſpect. The height of the ſun, which, in ſummer, nearly approaches the zenith, is doubtleſs a primary cauſe of this heat; but when we conſider that, in other countries, under the ſame latitude, the heat is leſs, we may conclude there exiſts a ſecondary cauſe, equally powerful with the former, and this perhaps, is the country being ſo little elevated above the level of the ſea. On this account, two ſeaſons only ſhould be diſtinguiſhed in Egypt; the ſpring and ſummer, that is to ſay, the cool ſeaſon, and the hot. The latter continues from March to November; and even from the end of February, the ſun is not ſupportable, for an European, at nine o'clock in the morning. During the

* 86° and 88° *of Fahrenheit's ſcale.*

whole of this ſeaſon the air is inflamed, the ſky ſparkling, and the heat oppreſſive to all unaccuſtomed to it. The body ſweats profuſely, even under the lighteſt dreſs, and in a ſtate of the moſt profound repoſe; and this perſpiration becomes ſo neceſſary, that, the ſlighteſt ſuppreſſion of it is a ſerious malady; inſomuch, that, the ordinary ſalute "How do "you do?" ought in Egypt to be: "How "do you ſweat?" The departure of the ſun tempers, in ſome degree, theſe heats. The vapours from the earth ſoaked by the Nile, and thoſe brought by the weſt, and north-weſt winds, abſorbing the fire diſperſed throughout the atmoſphere, produce an agreeable freſhneſs, and even piercing cold, if we may credit the natives, and ſome European merchants; but the Egyptians, almoſt naked, and accuſtomed to perſpire, ſhiver at the leaſt coolneſs. The thermometer, which, at the loweſt, in the month of February, ſtands at the eighth or ninth degree of Reaumur's ſcale *, above the freezing point, enables us to determine with certainty, and we may pronounce, that ſnow, and hail, are phœnomena which no

* 50° or 52° *of Fahrenheit's.*

Egyptian

Egyptian has ſeen in fifty years. As for our merchants, their ſenſibility is owing to their improper uſe of furs, which is carried ſo far, that, in winter, they have frequently two or three coverings of foxes-ſkin, and, even in ſummer, retain the ermine or *petit gris*. In excuſe for this, they plead the chillineſs they feel in the ſhade, as an indiſpenſable reaſon; and in fact, the northerly and weſterly currents of air, which almoſt continually prevail, cauſe a pretty conſiderable coolneſs out of the ſun; but the ſecret and real reaſon is, that the peliſſe is to be conſidered as the lace of Turkey, the favourite object of luxury; it is the ſign of opulence, and the etiquette of dignity; for the inveſtiture of important offices is always accompanied with the preſent of a peliſſe, as if they were to ſay of him to whom they give it, he is now arrived at ſo great eminence, he need concern himſelf with nothing, but perſpire at his eaſe.

It might naturally be imagined that Egypt, from theſe heats, and its wet and marſhy condition for three months, muſt be an unhealthy country; this was my firſt idea on my arrival there; and, when I beheld, at Cairo, the houſes of our merchants ranged

along the Kalidj, where the water ſtagnates till the month of April, I made no doubt that the exhalations thence ariſing, muſt cauſe many maladies; but experience proves the fallacy of this theory; the vapours of the ſtagnant waters, ſo fatal in Cyprus, and Alexandretta, are not ſo pernicious in Egypt. This appears to me to be owing to the natural dryneſs of the air, to the proximity of Africa and Arabia, which inceſſantly draw off the humidity, and the perpetual currents of wind, which meet with no obſtacle. This aridity is ſuch, that fleſh meat expoſed, even in ſummer, to the north wind, does not putrefy, but dries up, and becomes hard as wood. In the deſerts, dead carcaſes are found dried in this manner, which are ſo light, that a man may eaſily lift with one hand the entire body of a camel. *(k)*

The air, beſides poſſeſſing this drying quality, appears to be ſtrongly impregnated with ſalts, the proofs of which are every where apparent. The ſtones are corroded by natrum,

(k) It muſt be remarked, however, that the air near the ſea is infinitely leſs dry than higher up the country: Thus, at Alexandria, and Roſetta, iron cannot be expoſed four-and-twenty hours to the air, without ruſting.

and in moiſt places, long cryſtallizations of it are to be found, which might be taken for ſalt-petre. The wall of the Jeſuits garden, at Cairo, built with earth and bricks, is every where covered with a cruſt of this natrum, as thick as a crown-piece; and when this garden has been overflowed by the waters of the Kalidj, the ground, after they have drained off, appears ſparkling on every ſide with white cryſtals, which certainly were not brought thither by the water, ſince it ſhows no ſign of ſalt, either to the taſte, or in diſtillation.

It is no doubt, this property of the air, and the earth, which, added to the heat, gives vegetation an activity almoſt incredible in our cold climates. Wherever plants have water, the rapidity of their growth is prodigious. Whoever has travelled to Cairo, or Roſetta, knows, that the ſpecies of gourd called *kara*, will, in twenty-four hours, ſend out ſhoots near four inches long; but it is worthy obſervation, that this ſoil appears extremely unfavourable to all exotics. Foreign plants degenerate there rapidly: the truth of which remark is proved by daily experience. Our merchants are obliged every year to renew their ſeeds, and to ſend to Malta for their

cauliflowers, beet-root, carrots, and salsify; these, when sown, succeed at first very well; but if they again sow the seed they produce, the plants run up tall and weak. The same happens to apricots, pears, and peaches, when transported to Rosetta. The vegetation of this earth seems too violent for spungy and pulpy fruits, which should be gradually accustomed, by the arts of culture, to the soil and climate.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the various Inhabitants of Egypt.

AMID thoſe revolutions which all nations have experienced, there are few countries which have preſerved their original and primitive inhabitants pure and unmixed. Throughout the world, the ſame avarice and ambition which prompt individuals to encroach on each other's property, have excited nations one againſt another; and the conſequence of this oppoſition of intereſts and powers, has been to introduce into ſtates a foreign conqueror, who, now an inſolent uſurper, has deſpoiled the vanquiſhed nation of the domain granted them by nature; and now, a more timid or more civilized invader, has contented himſelf with participating in advantages refuſed him by his native ſoil. Here we ſee various races of inhabitants ſettling themſelves in the ſame country, who, adopting the ſame manners and intereſts, have ſometimes united in the moſt intimate alliances; but more frequently we

we find them ſeparated by political or religious prejudices, and remaining perpetually diſtinct. In the firſt caſe, the different races, loſing by the mixture their diſtinguiſhing characters, have formed an homogeneous people, among whom it is impoſſible to diſcover any traces of the revolution; in the ſecond, living diſtinct, their perpetuated differences are become a monument which has outlived ages, and which in ſome caſes may ſupply the ſilence of hiſtory.

Such is the caſe with Egypt: deprived, three-and-twenty centuries ago, of her natural proprietors, ſhe has ſeen her fertile fields ſucceſſively a prey to the Perſians, the Macedonians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Arabs, the Georgians, and, at length, the race of Tartars, diſtinguiſhed by the name of Ottoman Turks. Among ſo many nations, ſeveral of them have left veſtiges of their tranſient poſſeſſion; but as they have been blended in ſucceſſion, they have been ſo confounded as to render it very difficult to diſcriminate their reſpective characters. We may, however, ſtill diſtinguiſh the inhabitants of Egypt into four principal races, of different origin.

The

The firſt, and moſt generally diſperſed, is that of the Arabs, which may be divided into three claſſes. Firſt, the poſterity of thoſe who, on the conqueſt of Egypt by Amrou, in the year 640, haſtened from the Hedjaz, and every part of Arabia, to ſettle in this country, ſo juſtly celebrated for its fertility. Every one was anxious to poſſeſs lands in it, and the Delta was preſently filled with foreigners, to the prejudice of the vanquiſhed Greeks. This firſt race is preſerved in the preſent claſs of fellahs, or huibandmen, and artizans, who ſtill retain the characteriſtic features of their anceſtors, but are taller and ſtronger made, the natural effect of a more plentiful nouriſhment than that of the deſerts. In general, the Egyptian peaſants reach the height of five feet four inches, and many among them attain to five feet ſix or ſeven*. They are muſcular, without being fleſhy and corpulent, as men will be who are hardened to fatigue. Their ſkin, tanned by the ſun, is almoſt black, but their countenances have nothing diſagreeable. The greateſt part of them have heads of a fine oval, large

* *Near five feet eight, and five feet ten or eleven inches, Engliſh meaſure; the French foot (meant through this work,) being to the Engliſh as* 144 *to* 135.

and

and projecting foreheads, and, under a dark eyebrow, a black, ſunken, but brilliant eye, the noſe large, but not aquiline, well-ſhaped mouths, and, without exception, fine teeth. The inhabitants of the great towns, more motley, have a leſs uniform and marked phyſiognomy. Thoſe of the villages, on the contrary, forming no alliances but in their own families, have more general and more conſtant characteriſtics, and ſomething of ferocity in their air, which originates in the paſſions of a mind continually ſoured by the perpetual war and tyranny which ſurround them.

A ſecond claſs of Arabs is that of the Africans, or Occidentals *(l)*, who have arrived at different periods, and under different chiefs, and united themſelves to the former; like them, they are deſcended from the Muſſulmen conquerors, who expelled the Greeks from Mauritania; like them, they exerciſe agriculture and trades; but they are more eſpecially numerous in the Said, where they have villages, and even diſtinct ſovereigns of their own.

The third claſs is that of the *Bedouins*, or inhabitants of the deſerts *(m)*, known to

(l) In Arabic *magarbe*, the plural of *magrebi*, weſtern.

(m) In Arabic *bedaoui*, formed of *bid*, deſert, country without habitations.

the ancients by the name of *Scenites*, that is, dwellers in tents. Some of theſe, diſperſed in families, inhabit the rocks, caverns, ruins, and ſequeſtered places where there is water; others, united in tribes, encamp under low and ſmoaky tents, and paſs their lives in perpetual journeyings, ſometimes in the deſert, ſometimes on the banks of the river; having no other attachment to the ſoil than what ariſes from their own ſafety, or the ſubſiſtence of their flocks. There are tribes of them who arrive every year after the inundation, from the heart of Africa, to profit by the fertility of the country, and who in the ſpring retire into the depths of the deſert; others are ſtationary in Egypt, where they farm lands, which they ſow, and annually change. All of them obſerve among themſelves ſtated limits, which they never paſs, on pain of war. They all lead nearly the ſame kind of life, and have the ſame manners and cuſtoms. Ignorant and poor, the Bedouins preſerve an original character diſtinct from ſurrounding nations. Pacific in their camp, they are every where elſe in an habitual ſtate of war. The huſbandmen, whom they pillage, hate them; the travellers, whom they

deſpoil,

deſpoil, ſpeak ill of them; and the Turks who dread them, endeavour to divide and corrupt them. It is calculated that the different tribes of them in Egypt might form a body of thirty thouſand horſemen; but theſe are ſo diſperſed and diſunited, that they are only conſidered as robbers and vagabonds.

A ſecond race of inhabitants are the Copts, called in Arabic *el Kobt*. Several families of them are to be found in the Delta; but the greateſt part inhabit the Said, where they in ſome places occupy whole villages. Both hiſtory and tradition atteſt their deſcent from the people who were conquered by the Arabs, that is, from that mixture of Egyptians, Perſians, and, above all, Greeks, who, under the Ptolemies and Conſtantines, were ſo long in poſſeſſion of Egypt. They differ from the Arabs by their religion, which is Chriſtianity; but they are again diſtinct from other Chriſtians by their ſect, being Eutychians. Their adherence to the theological diſtinctions of this hereſy, has drawn perſecutions on them on the part of the other Greeks, which has rendered them irreconcileable enemies. When the Arabs conquered the country, they took advantage of theſe animoſities, to enfeeble them

them both. The Copts have at length expelled their rivals, and, as they have been always intimately acquainted with the interior of the country, they are become the depoſitaries of the regiſters of the lands and tribes. Under the name of *writers*, they are at Cairo the intendants, ſecretaries, and collectors of government. Theſe writers, deſpiſed by the Turks, whom they ſerve, and hated by the peaſants, whom they oppreſs, form a kind of ſeparate claſs, the head of which is the writer to the principal Bey. He diſpoſes of all employments in that department, which, according to the ſpirit of the Turkiſh government, he beſtows on the beſt bidder.

It is pretended that the name of *Copts*, is derived from the city of *Coptos*, whither it has been affirmed they retired from the tyranny of the Greeks; but I am inclined to think it has a more natural and more ancient origin. The Arabic term *Kobti*, a Copt, ſeems to me an evident abbreviation of the Greek word *Ai-goupti-os*, an Egyptian; for the *y* was pronounced *ou*, among the ancient Greeks, and the Arabs having neither *p* nor *g* before *a*, *o*, *u*, always ſubſtitute for theſe letters *k* and *b*; the Copts then are properly the remains

of

of the ancient Egyptians *(n)*. This will be rendered ſtill more probable, if we conſider the diſtinguiſhing features of this race of people; we ſhall find them all characterized by a ſort of yellowiſh duſky complexion, which is neither Grecian nor Arabian; they have all a puffed viſage, ſwoln eyes, flat noſes, and thick lips, in ſhort the exact countenance of a Mulatto. I was at firſt tempted to attribute this to the climate *(o)*, but when I viſited the ſphynx, I could not help thinking the figure of that monſter furniſhed the true ſolution of

(n) This is the more probable, ſince we find them in the Said before the time of Diocleſian, and it is certain the Greeks were leſs numerous in the Said than the Delta.

(o) In fact, we may obſerve the countenance of the negroes repreſents preciſely that ſtate of contraction which our faces aſſume when ſtrongly affected by heat. The eyebrows are knit, the cheeks riſe, the eye-lids are contracted, and the mouth diſtorted. This ſtate of contraction, to which the features are perpetually expoſed in the hot climates of the negroes, is become the peculiar characteriſtic of their countenance. Exceſſive cold, wind and ſnow produce the ſame effect, and thus we diſcover the ſame faces among the Tartars; while, in the temperate zones, where theſe extremes are unknown, the features are lengthened, the eyes leſs prominent, and the whole countenance more expanded.

the

the enigma: when I ſaw its features preciſely thoſe of a negro, I recollected the remarkable paſſage of Herodotus, in which he ſays, "For my part, I believe the Colchi to be "a colony of Egyptians, becauſe, like them, "they have black ſkins and frizzled hair *(p)*:" that is, that the ancient Egyptians were real negroes, of the ſame ſpecies with all the natives of Africa; and though, as might be expected, after mixing for ſo many ages with the Greeks and Romans, they have loſt the intenſity of their firſt colour, yet they ſtill retain ſtrong marks of their original conformation.

This obſervation may be ſtill farther extended, and it may be laid down as a general principle, that the features are a kind of monument capable, in many caſes, of elucidating and aſcertaining the teſtimony of hiſtory, concerning the origin of nations. Among us, a lapſe of nine hundred years has not been able to efface thoſe diſcriminating marks which diſtinguiſhed the inhabitants of Gaul from thoſe northern invaders, who, under Charles the Groſs, ſettled themſelves in our

(p) Μελαγχροες εισι και ουλοτριχες, Lib. II. p. 150.

richeſt provinces. Travellers who go from Normandy to Denmark, obſerve, with aſtoniſhment, the extreme reſemblance of the inhabitants of thoſe two countries, which ſtill ſubſiſts, notwithſtanding the diſtance of times and places. The ſame remark may be made with reſpect to Franconia and Burgundy; and throughout England, France, and every other country, the ſame proofs of emigration are found in the features of the inhabitants. Do not the Jews, in whatever part of the world they reſide, carry with them diſtinguiſhing marks never to be effaced? In thoſe ſtates where the nobility have deſcended from a foreign people, introduced by conqueſt, if thoſe nobles contract no alliance with the natives, they will always remain diſtinct in their features and perſons. The Calmuc race is, on this account, extremely diſtinguiſhable in India; and were we attentively to examine the various nations of Europe, and the North of Aſia, we might poſſibly diſcover many reſemblances which have been long ſince forgotten.

But to return to Egypt: this hiſtorical fact affords to philoſophy an intereſting ſubject of reflection. How are we aſtoniſhed when we behold

behold the preſent barbariſm and ignorance of the Copts, deſcended from the profound genius of the Egyptians, and the brilliant imagination of the Greeks; when we reflect that to the race of negroes, at preſent our ſlaves, and the objects of our extreme contempt, we owe our arts, ſciences, and even the very uſe of ſpeech; and when we recollect that, in the midſt of thoſe nations who call themſelves the friends of liberty and humanity, the moſt barbarous of ſlaveries is juſtified; and that it is even a problem whether the underſtanding of negroes be of the ſame ſpecies with that of white men!

Language may be conſidered as another monument whoſe indications are neither leſs juſt nor leſs inſtructive. That formerly ſpoken by the Copts well confirms this obſervation. On one hand, the form of their letters, and the greater part of their words, demonſtrate that the Greek nation, during the thouſand years it continued in Egypt, has left deep marks of its power and influence; but, on the other, the Coptic alphabet has five letters, and the language a number of words, which may be conſidered as the remains of the ancient Egyptian. Theſe words, criti-

cally examined, have a ſenſible analogy with the dialects of the ancient neighbouring nations, ſuch as the Arabs, Ethiopians, Syrians, and even thoſe who lived on the banks of the Euphrates; nor can it be doubted but all theſe languages are derived from one common ſtock. For upwards of three centuries, that of the Copts has fallen into diſuſe. The Arabs, diſdaining the language of the nations they ſubdued, impoſed on them, together with their yoke, the neceſſity of learning that of their conquerors. This obligation became even a law, when, about the end of the firſt century of the Hejira, the Caliph Waled I. prohibited the Greek tongue throughout his whole empire. From that time the Arabic became univerſal; and the other languages, confined to books, ſubſiſted only for the learned, who neglected them. Such has been the fate of the Coptic; the prieſts and monks no longer underſtand it, in their ſcriptures and books of devotion, in which alone it exiſts; and in Egypt, as in Syria, every one, whether Mahometan or Chriſtian, ſpeaks Arabic, nor is any other language underſtood.

Some obſervations, important to geography and hiſtory, here preſent themſelves. Travellers,

vellers, in treating of the countries they have ſeen, are accuſtomed, and frequently find it abſolutely neceſſary, to employ ſome words of the language; as in giving the proper names of nations, men, cities, rivers, and natural productions peculiar to the country; but hence has ariſen this inconvenience, that by conveying the words of one language in the characters of another, they have ſo diſfigured them, as to render them difficult to be known. This has happened particularly with reſpect to the countries of which I treat; and, in books of hiſtory and geography, the conſequence has been an incredible and inexplicable confuſion. Any Arab, who ſhould learn French, would not recognize in our maps ten words of his own language, and, when we ourſelves have learnt Arabic, we experience the ſame inconvenience. The cauſes of this are various.

Firſt, the ignorance of travellers, in general, of the Arabic language, and eſpecially of the pronunciation; which ignorance occaſions their ear, unaccuſtomed to foreign ſounds, to make a vicious compariſon of them with thoſe of their own language *(g)*.

(g) This is true even of the learned Pococke, who, notwithſtanding his great knowledge of oriental books,

Secondly, the nature of ſeveral ſounds, which have nothing analogous to them in the language in which they attempt to convey them. This the French experience every day in the *th* of the Engliſh, and in the *jota* of the Spaniards. Without hearing, it is impoſſible for any man to form an idea of theſe; but this difficulty is ſtill greater in the Arabic, in which language there are three vowels, and ſeven or eight conſonants, to which Europeans are utter ſtrangers. How then is it poſſible to repreſent them, ſo as to retain their true ſound, and not confound them with others totally different?

A third cauſe of confuſion has ariſen from writers who have compiled books and maps. In collecting their information from all the Europeans who have travelled in the Eaſt, they have adopted the orthography of proper names, ſuch as they found it in the author they conſulted, without conſidering that the different

could never diſpenſe with an interpreter; and very lately Vonhaven, Profeſſor of Arabic in Denmark, was unable even to underſtand the *ſalam alai kom* (good-morrow) when he arrived in Egypt; and his young companion Forſkal, at the end of a year, had made a much greater progreſs than he had.

nations

nations of Europe, though they equally uſe the Roman characters, ſound them differently.—For example, the *u* of the Italians is not the *u* of the French, but *ou*. Their *gh* is ſounded like *gu*, and their *c*, *tch*: hence an apparent diverſity of names, which are, in fact, the ſame. Thus it is, that what ſhould be written in French *chaik*, or *chék*, is variouſly expreſſed by *(r) ſchek*, *ſhekh*, *ſchech*, *ſciek*, according as the word has been copied from Engliſh, German, or Italian writers, with whom *ſh*, *ſch*, *ſc*, are reſpectively ſounded like our *ché*. The Poles would write *ſzech*, and the Spaniards *chej*. This difference of the final *j*, *ch*, and *kh*, ariſes from the Arabic letter being the Spaniſh *jota*, or German *ch (s)*, the ſound of which is unknown to the Engliſh French, or Italians. Hence it is that the Engliſh write *Rooda*, for the name of the iſland, which the Italians write *Ruda*, and which we, like the Arabs, ſhould pronounce *Rouda*; that Pococke writes *harammee* for *harami*, a robber; and Niebuhr *dsjebel* for *djebel*, a mountain; that Danville, who has

(*r*) To make theſe differences ſenſible in reading, the letters muſt be pronounced one by one.

(*s*) Not in all caſes, but after *o* and *u*, as in *buch*, a book.

made great uſe of Engliſh memoirs, writes *Shâm* for *Châm*, Syria; *wadi* for *ouadi*, a valley; and a thouſand other examples.

This, as I have ſaid, has introduced a great confuſion in orthography; and, if it be not remedied, we ſhall find the ſame uncertainty in modern writers we ſo juſtly complain of in the ancients, who, by their ignorance of the barbarous languages, and by their rage for accommodating the ſounds of them to the taſte of the Greeks and Romans, have deſtroyed all traces of the original names, and deprived us of an invaluable mean of diſcovering the ancient ſtate of things in that now ſubſiſting. Our language is ſubject to the ſame delicacy; it diſfigures every thing, and our ear rejects, as barbarous, whatever it is not accuſtomed to. It is uſeleſs, no doubt, to introduce new characters; but it might not be amiſs to approach, as near as poſſible, the ſound of thoſe we would expreſs, and repreſent them by thoſe of our letters which are beſt adapted, adding to them ſome certain marks *(t)*. Were this done by every nation, there

(t) When the French travellers, who are making the tour of the world, return, we ſhall, no doubt, ſee no ſmal con-

there would be but one nomenclature, and this would be a firſt ſtep towards an invention, which every day becomes more wanted, and more eaſy to effect, a *general alphabet*, adapted to all languages, or at leaſt to thoſe of Europe. In the courſe of this work I ſhall make as little uſe as poſſible of Arabic words; but when I ſhall be under that neceſſity, let not the reader be ſurpriſed, if I frequently depart from the orthography of the generality of travellers. To judge from what they have written, we ſhould be induced to think, that not one of them has known the true pronunciation of the Arabic alphabet, or underſtood how to convey the ſounds of that language in our characters. But I return to my ſubject.

A third race of inhabitants in Egypt are the Turks, who are the maſters of the country, or at leaſt poſſeſs that title. The name of

confuſion produced in their narratives, by the variations of the Engliſh and French orthography. (This confuſion is already ſufficiently exemplified in the different accounts of the ſame voyages, publiſhed reſpectively by Hawkeſworth, Parkinſon, Cook, Forſter, &c. and by the different modes of writing the ſame words, by the officers, and others, in the different ſhips. T.)

Turk, originally, was not peculiar to the nation to which it is now applied: it denoted, in general, all the hordes diſperſed to the eaſt, and even to the north, of the Caſpian Sea, as far as beyond Lake Aral, over thoſe vaſt countries which have taken from them the denomination of *Tourk-eſtan (u)*. Theſe are the ſame people, who were known to the ancient Greeks by the names of Parthians, Maſſagetæ and even of Scythians, for which we have ſubſtituted that of Tartars. A nation of ſhepherds, continually wandering, like the Bedouin Arabs; they have ſhewn themſelves, in every age, brave and formidable warriors. Neither Cyrus nor Alexander were able to ſubdue them. But the Arabs were more fortunate. About eighty years after Mahomet, they invaded, by order of the Caliph Waled I. the country of the Turks, and, by force of arms, impoſed on them their religion: they even obliged them to pay tribute. But the empire falling into confuſion, the rebel governors had recourſe to their aid to reſiſt the power of

(u) *Eſtan* is a Perſian word, ſignifying *country*, and is uſed as a termination to proper names; as in *Arab-eſtan*, *Frank-eſtan*, and we may add *Kourd-eſtan*, and *Indo-ſtan*, &c.

the

the Caliphs, and they took part in every conteſt; nor were they long in acquiring the aſcendant this might be expected to give them: for, continually encamped, and with arms in their hands, they became a warlike people, and initiated in every military manœuvre. Like the Bedouins, they were divided into tribes, or camps, called, in their language, *ordou*, of which we have made *horde*; and theſe tribes, allied or at variance, according to their ſeveral intereſts, were perpetually engaged in wars. Hence we ſee, in their hiſtory, ſeveral nations, all equally called Turks, alternately attacking, deſtroying, and expelling each other. To avoid this confuſion, I ſhall confine the name of *Turks* to thoſe of Conſtantinople, and ſhall give that of *Turkmans* to their predeceſſors.

Some hordes of Turkmans, then, having been introduced into the Arabian empire, proceeded in a ſhort time to give law to thoſe who had called them in, either as mercenaries or allies. This the Caliphs themſelves experienced in a remarkable inſtance. Motazzam *(x)*, brother and ſucceſſor of Almamoun,

(x) In 834.

having

having taken a body of Turkmans for his guards, ſaw himſelf compelled to quit Bagdad on account of their diſorders; and, after his time, their power and inſolence increaſed to ſuch a degree, that they became the diſpoſers of the throne and life of their Princes, and murdered three of them in leſs than thirty years. The Caliphs, when freed from this firſt bondage, did not profit by their experience; for, about the year 935, Radi B'ellah *(y)* having again reſigned his authority to a Turkman, his ſucceſſors were entangled in their former chains, and guarded by the Emirs-el-omara; poſſeſſed only the ſhadow of power. Amid the diſorders of this anarchy, a multitude of Turkman hordes penetrated into the empire, and founded different independent ſtates, in the Kerman, and the Koraſan; at Iconium, Aleppo, Damaſcus, and in Egypt.

'Till then, the preſent Turks, diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Ogouzians*, had remained to the eaſt of the Caſpian, and toward the Djihoun; but, about the beginning of the thirteenth century, Djenkiz-kan having unit-

(y) Who delights in God.

ed

ed all the tribes of Upper Tartary againſt the Princes of Balk and Samarcand, the Ogouzians did not think proper to wait for the Mogols, but began their march under their Chief Soliman, and, driving their herds before them, encamped (in 1214) in the Aderbedjân, to the number of fifty thouſand horſemen. The Moguls followed them, and puſhed them ſtill farther to the weſt, into Armenia. Soliman being drowned (in 1220), in endeavouring to paſs the Euphrates on horſeback, Ertogrul, his ſon, took the command of the hordes, and advanced into the plains of Aſia Minor, to which he was allured by the abundant paſturage they afforded for his cattle. The good conduct of this chief procured him, in theſe countries, a power and reſpect which made his alliance ſought after by other Princes. Among theſe was the Turkman Ala-el-din, Sultan of Iconium. Ala-el-din, finding himſelf old, and haraſſed by the Tartars of Djenkiz-kan, granted lands to the Turks under Ertogrul, and even made their Chief general of all his troops. Ertogrul proved himſelf deſerving the confidence of the Sultan, vanquiſhed the Mogols, acquired ſtill greater power and reputation, and tranſmitted his

his honours to his ſon Oſman, who received from Ala-el-din, ſucceſſor of the former of that name, the Koſetan, drum, and horſe-tails, which are ſymbols of command among all the Tartars. This Oſman, to diſtinguiſh the Turks, his followers, from the others, gave them the name of *Oſmanles*, from which we have made *Ottomans (z)*; which new name ſoon became formidable to the Greeks of Conſtantinople, from whom Oſman conquered a ſufficient extent of territory to found a powerful kingdom. He ſoon beſtowed on it that title, by aſſuming, in 1300, the dignity of *Sultan*, which ſignifies abſolute ſovereign.

No one is ignorant in what manner his ſucceſſors, the heirs of his ambition and activity, continued to aggrandize themſelves at the expence of the Greeks; till, continually depriving them of whole provinces in Europe and Aſia, they at length ſhut them up within the walls of Conſtantinople; and Mahomet II. ſon of Amurath, having taken that city in 1453, annihilated this branch of the

(z) This change of the *s* to the *t*, ariſes from the original letter being the Engliſh *th*, which foreigners expreſs ſometimes by *t*, ſometimes by *s*.

Roman

Roman empire. The Turks, now finding themſelves diſengaged from the affairs of Europe, turned their ambitious arms againſt the ſouthern provinces. Bagdad, ſubjugated by the Tartars, had been without Caliphs for two hundred years *(a)*, but a new power, eſtabliſhed in Perſia, had ſucceeded to a part of their domains; and another, formed in Egypt, ſo early as the tenth century, and ſubſiſting, at that time, under the name of Mamlouks, had ſeized on Syria.

The Turks determined to deſpoil theſe two rivals. Bayazid, the ſon of Mahomet, executed a part of this plan, by taking Armenia from the Sofi of Perſia, and Selim his ſon completed it, by the conqueſt of the Mamlouks. This Sultan having drawn them near to Aleppo, in 1517, under pretext of deſiring their aſſiſtance in the war with Perſia, ſuddenly turned his arms againſt them, and took from them ſucceſſively Syria and Egypt, whither he purſued them. From that time the Turks eſtabliſhed themſelves in that coun-

(a) In 1239, Holagoukan, a deſcendant of Djenkiz, put an end to the Caliphat in the perſon of Moſtazem.

try;

try; but they are not ſettled much among the villages. We rarely meet with any individuals of that nation, except at Cairo; there they exerciſe the arts, and occupy the religious and military employments. Formerly they alſo were advanced to poſts under government, but, within the laſt thirty years, a tacit revolution has taken place, which, without taking from them the title, has deprived them of the reality of power.

This revolution has been effected by a fourth and laſt race, of which it now remains for us to ſpeak. The individuals of it, all born at the foot of Mount Caucaſus, are diſtinguiſhed from the other inhabitants by the flaxen colour of their hair, which is entirely different from that of the natives of Egypt. Theſe were found there by the Cruſaders in the thirteenth century, and called by them Mamelus, or, more correctly, Mamlouks. After remaining almoſt annihilated for two hundred and thirty years, under the government of the Ottomans, they have found means to regain their conſequence. The hiſtory of this claſs of ſoldiers, the events which firſt brought them into Egypt, the manner

manner in which they have continued, and re-eſtabliſhed themſelves in that country, and the nature of their government, are political phænomena of ſo very ſingular a nature, that they well deſerve we ſhould beſtow a few pages in giving a diſtinct account of them.

CHAP. VII.

A ſummary of the hiſtory of the Mamlouks.

THE Greeks of Conſtantinople, debaſed by a deſpotic and bigoted government, had ſeen, in the courſe of the ſeventh century, the fineſt provinces of their empire fall a prey to a new people. The Arabs, inflamed by the fanaticiſm of their religion, and ſtill more by the enjoyment of luxuries to which they had hitherto been ſtrangers, conquered, within eighty years, the whole north of Africa, as far as the Canaries, and all the ſouth of Aſia, quite to the river Indus, and the Tartarian deſerts. But the book of the Prophet, which preſcribed them their ablutions, faſts, and prayers, did not teach them either the ſcience of legiſlation, or thoſe principles of natural morality which are the ſolid foundations of empires and ſocieties. The Arabs knew how to conquer, but by no means to govern: wherefore, the misſhapen edifice of their power ſoon mouldered into ruins. The vaſt empire of the Caliphs, paſſing from deſpotiſm to anarchy,

chy, was diſmembered on every ſide; and the temporal governors, undeceived reſpecting the ſanctity of their ſpiritual chief, every where erected themſelves into ſovereigns, and formed independent ſtates.

Egypt was not the laſt to follow this example; but it was not till 969, *(b)* that a regular power was eſtabliſhed, in that country, in the perſon of princes, who, aſſuming the name of Fatmite Caliphs, diſputed, even the title of their dignity, with thoſe of Bagdad. The latter, at this period, ſtripped of their authority, by the Turkmen ſoldiers, were no longer capable of oppoſing their pretenſions. Thus did the Egyptian Caliphs peaceably obtain poſſeſſion of that rich country, of which they might have formed a powerful ſtate. But the whole hiſtory of the Arabs uniformly tends to prove that this nation never knew the ſcience of government. The ſovereigns of Egypt, no leſs deſpotic than thoſe of Bagdad, proceeded, by like ſteps, to the ſame deſtruction. They took part in the quarrels of religious ſects; they even ſet up new ones, and endeavoured to make proſelytes by perſecution. One of them,

(b) Or, 972, according to D'Herbelot.

named *Hakem b'amr ellah*, *(c)* was ſo abſurdly extravagant as to declare himſelf an incarnate God, and barbarous enough to ſet fire to Cairo, for his amuſement. Others diſſipated the public treaſure in a capricious luxury. The people, whom they oppreſſed, held them in abhorrence, and their own courtiers, emboldened by their weakneſs, were eager to ſhare their ſpoils. Thus it happened to Adhad-el-din, the laſt of that race. After having been invaded by the cruſaders, who had impoſed on him a tribute, one of his generals, whom he had diſmiſſed his ſervice, threatened to deprive him of a power of which he ſhewed himſelf ſo unworthy. Knowing, that he was incapable of reſiſting by himſelf, and unable to confide in a nation he had alienated from him, he had recourſe to foreigners. In vain did reaſon and experience dictate to him that theſe, once employed as his defenders, would ſoon become the maſters of his perſon; one falſe ſtep neceſſarily led to a ſecond. He called in that tribe of Turkmans who had en-

(c) Governor by the command of God. This is the apoſtle of the *Druſes*. See the curious account of that ſingular people, publiſhed in 1786, from the manuſcript of M. *Venture de Paradis*, and printed for Robinſons.

ſlaved

ſlaved the Bagdad caliphs, and implored the aid of Nour-el-din, the ſovereign of Aleppo, who, already ravaging Egypt, haſtened to ſend an army into that country. Theſe troops effectually delivered Adhad from the tribute of the Franks, and the menaces of his general. But the Caliph ſoon found he had only changed his enemies; they left him nothing but the ſhadow of power; and Selah-el-din, who took the command of the army in 1171, concluded by ſtrangling him. Thus, the Egyptian Arabs were ſubjected to ſtrangers, whoſe princes commenced a new dynaſty in the perſon of Selah-el-din.

During theſe tranſactions in Egypt, and while the cruſaders were, by their ill-conduct, laying the foundation for their expulſion from Syria, other revolutions were preparing in upper Aſia. Djenkiz-Kan, become the ſole chief of almoſt all the Tartar hordes, was only waiting for a favourable opportunity to invade the neighbouring ſtates: an inſult committed on ſome merchants, under his protection, determined him to turn his arms againſt the Sultan of Balk, and the eaſtern part of Perſia; which countries, about the year 1218, became the theatre of one of the moſt bloody

devaſtations recorded in hiſtory. The Mogols, ſword in hand, pillaging, burning, and murdering, without diſtinction, either of age or ſex, reduced the whole country of Sihoun, quite to the Tigris, to a heap of aſhes; and paſſing to the north of the Caſpian ſea, extended their ravages even into Ruſſia and the Cuban. This expedition, which took place in 1227, eventually introduced the Mamlouks into Egypt. The Tartars, weary of maſſacring, had brought back with them a prodigious quantity of young ſlaves, of both ſexes; their camps, and the markets of Aſia, were full of them. The ſucceſſors of Selah-el-din, who, as Turkmans, correſponded with the coaſts of the Caſpian ſea, perceived they had now an opportunity of forming, at a cheap rate, a body of ſoldiers of tried courage, and remarkable beauty; and about the year 1230, one of them purchaſed to the number of twelve thouſand of theſe young men, who were Tcherkaſſes, (Circaſſians), Mingrelians and Abazans. He had them trained up to military exerciſes, and ſoon obtained a body of the handſomeſt, and beſt ſoldiers in Aſia, though at the ſame time, the moſt mutinous, as he very ſoon experienced.

rienced. This ſoldiery, like the Pretorian bands, preſently gave laws to their maſter. They became ſtill more inſolent under his ſucceſſor, whom they depoſed, in 1250, and, ſhortly after the diſaſter of Saint Louis, ſlew the laſt Turkman prince, and ſubſtituted one of their own chiefs, with the title of Sultan *(d)*, retaining themſelves that of Mamlouks, which ſignifies military ſlaves. *(e)*

Such is this militia of ſlaves, converted into deſpots, who, for many centuries, have continued to give law to Egypt. From their firſt eſtabliſhment, the effects correſponded with the means. Without any other bond of union than the intereſt of the moment, or any public right to authority, but that of conqueſt, the Mamlouks had no other rule of conduct and government, than the violence of a licentious and inſolent ſoldiery. The firſt

(d) The old French writers made Soldan and Soudan of this word, by the frequent change of *ol* into *ou*; as in *fol fou*, *mol*, *mou*, &c.

(e) *Mamlouk*, the participle paſſive of *malak*, to poſſeſs, ſignifies one *poſſeſſed* by, or the property of, another; which gives the ſenſe of *ſlave*. But theſe are to be diſtinguiſhed from domeſtic ſlaves, or blacks, who are called *Abd*.

leader whom they elected, having found employment for their turbulent ſpirit in the conqueſt of Syria, reigned ſeventeen years; but ſince him not one of them has governed ſo long. The ſword, the bow-ſtring, or poiſon, public murder, or private aſſaſſination, have been the fate of a ſeries of tyrants, forty-ſeven of whom are enumerated in the ſpace of two hundred and fifty-ſeven years. At length, in 1517, Selim, Sultan of the Ottomans, having taken and hanged Toumam Bey, their laſt chief, put a period to that dynaſty.

Agreeable to the principles of Turkiſh policy, Selim ſhould have exterminated the whole body of Mamlouks; but more refined views induced him, in this inſtance, to depart from that ſanguinary cuſtom. He was ſenſible that if he eſtabliſhed a Pacha in Egypt, with the ſame authority as the Pachas in the other provinces, the diſtance from the capital would be a ſtrong temptation to revolt. To prevent this inconvenience, he projected ſuch a form of government that the power, being diſtributed among the different members of the ſtate, ſhould preſerve ſuch an equilibrium as ſhould keep them all dependent on himſelf. The remnant of the Mamlouks, who had eſcaped

eſcaped his firſt maſſacre, appeared proper for this purpoſe; and he next eſtabliſhed a Divan, or Council of Regency, compoſed of the Pacha and the chiefs of the ſeven military corps. The office of the Pacha was to notify to this council the orders of the Porte, to expedite the tribute to Conſtantinople, to watch over the ſafety of the country againſt foreign enemies, and to counteract the ambitious views of the different parties; on the other hand, the Members of the Council poſſeſſed the right of rejecting the orders of the Pacha, on aſſigning their reaſons, nay, even of depoſing him; they alſo muſt ratify all civil or political ordinances. As for the Mamlouks, it was agreed that from them ſhould be choſen the twenty-four governors, or Beys (*), of the provinces: to them was intruſted the care of reſtraining the Arabs, ſuperintending the collection of the tributes, and the whole civil government of the country; but their authority was purely paſſive, and they were only to be conſidered as the inſtruments of the determinations of the council. One of

(*) This word the author always writes *Bek*, but we have retained the moſt cuſtomary ſpelling, though the other is probably neareſt the true pronunciation.

them,

them, reſiding at Cairo, was to bear the title of *Shaik-el-beled (f)*, which ſhould be rendered *Governor of the city*, in a ſenſe merely civil, that is to ſay, unaccompanied with any idea of military power.

The Sultan likewiſe eſtabliſhed tributes, one part of which was deſtined to pay twenty thouſand infantry, and a corps of twelve thouſand cavalry, reſident in the country; the other, to procure for Mecca and Medina, the ſupplies of corn neceſſary for them; and the third, to ſwell the Kaſna, or treaſury of Conſtantinople, and to ſupport the luxury of the ſeraglio. In other reſpects, the people, who were to provide for theſe expences, have been conſidered, as M. Savary very well obſerves, only as mere paſſive agents, and remain in ſubjection, as heretofore, to all the rigours of a military deſpotiſm.

This form of government has not ill correſponded with the views of Selim, ſince it has ſubſiſted about two centuries; but within the laſt fifty years, the Porte having relaxed

(f) *Shaik* properly ſignifies an old man, *ſenior populi*; it has the ſame acceptation in the Eaſt as among us, and means a lord or chief.

from its vigilance, innovations have taken place; the Mamlouks have increaſed, become maſters of all the riches and ſtrength of the country, and, in ſhort, gained ſuch an aſcendency over the Turks, that the power of the latter is reduced almoſt to nothing. To conceive the nature of this revolution, we muſt conſider the manner in which the Mamlouks are continued and multiplied in Egypt.

On ſeeing them ſubſiſting in this country for ſeveral centuries, we ſhould be led to imagine their race is preſerved by the ordinary means; but if their firſt eſtabliſhment was a ſingular event, their continuation is not leſs extraordinary. During five hundred and fifty years that there have been Mamlouks in Egypt, not one of them has left ſubſiſting iſſue; there does not exiſt one ſingle family of them in the ſecond generation; all their children periſh in the firſt or ſecond deſcent. Almoſt the ſame thing happens to the Turks; and it is obſerved that they can only ſecure the continuance of their families, by marrying women who are natives, which the Mamlouks have always

diſ-

diſdained *(g)*. Let the naturaliſt explain why men, well formed, and married to healthy women, are unable to naturalize on the banks of the Nile, a race born at the foot of Mount Caucaſus! and let it be remembered, at the ſame time, that the

(g) The wives of the Mamlouks, are, like them, ſlaves brought from Georgia, Mingrelia, &c. Their beauty is a conſtant topic among us, and we muſt believe it on the credit of fame. But an European, who has only been in Turkey, has no right to give his teſtimony on the ſubject. Theſe women are more inviſible there than the others, and to this no doubt the reputation they have for beauty is greatly owing. I had an opportunity of learning ſome particulars concerning them from the wife of one of our merchants at Cairo, who, by dealing in the laces and ſtuffs of Lyons, had acceſs to all the Harems. This lady, who has more than one claim to form a correct judgment of them, aſſured me that, among a thouſand, or twelve hundred, choſen women ſhe had ſeen, ſhe had not found ten real beauties. But the Turks are not difficult: provided a woman be fair, ſhe is handſome; and if ſhe be fat, ſhe his enchanting: " her countenance " is like the full moon; her haunches are like cuſhions," ſay they, to expreſs the ſuperlative of beauty. They may be ſaid to meaſure them by the quintal. They have beſides a proverb worthy the notice of naturaliſts: " Take a " fair female for thy eyes, but for pleaſure an Egyp- " tian." Experience has proved to them, that the Northern women are colder than thoſe of the South.

plants

plants of Europe, in that country, are equally unable to continue their ſpecies! Some may refuſe to believe this extraordinary fact, but it is not on that account leſs certain; nor does it appear to be new. The ancients have made obſervations of the ſame nature: thus, when Hippocrates *(b)* aſſerts, that among the Scythians and Egyptians, all the individuals reſemble each other, though they are like no other nations; when he adds, that in the countries inhabited by theſe two races of men, the climate, ſeaſons, elements, and ſoil poſſeſs an uniformity no where elſe to be found, does he not recognize that kind of excluſion of which I ſpeak? When ſuch countries impreſs ſo peculiar a character on every thing native, is it not a reaſon why they ſhould reject whatever is foreign? It ſeems, then, that the only means of naturalizing animals, and plants would be to contract an affinity with the climate, by alliance with the native ſpecies; and this, as I have before ſaid, the Mamlouks have conſtantly refuſed.

The means therefore by which they are perpetuated and multiplied, are the ſame by

(b) Hippocrates, lib. de Aere, Locis et Aquis.

which they were firſt eſtabliſhed; that is to ſay, when they die, they are replaced by ſlaves brought from their original country. From the time of the Mogols, this commerce has been continued on the confines of the Cuban and the Phaſis *(i)*, in the ſame manner as it is carried on in Africa, by the wars among the numerous tribes, and by the miſery of the inhabitants, who ſell their own children for a ſubſiſtence.

Theſe ſlaves, of both ſexes, carried firſt to Conſtantinople, are afterwards diſperſed throughout the empire, and purchaſed by the wealthy. The Turks, when they ſubdued Egypt, ſhould undoubtedly have prohibited this dangerous traffic: their omitting this has been the cauſe of that reverſe of fortune which ſeems about to diſpoſſeſs them of their conqueſt, and which many political errors have been long preparing.

For a conſiderable time the Porte had neglected the affairs of this province; and, in

(i) This country has been at all times a nurſery for ſlaves; it furniſhed the Greeks, Romans, and ancient Aſia with them. But is it not extraordinary to read in Herodotus, that formerly Colchis (now called Georgia), received black inhabitants from Egypt, and to ſee the ſame country, at this day, make ſo different a return?

order

order to reſtrain the Pachas, had ſuffered the Divan to extend its power, till the chiefs of the Janiſaries and Azabs were left without controul. The ſoldiers themſelves, become citizens, by the marriages they had contracted, were no longer the creatures of Conſtantinople; and a change introduced into their diſcipline ſtill more increaſed theſe diſorders.

At firſt, the ſeven military corps had one common treaſury, and, though the ſociety was rich, individuals, not having any thing at their own diſpoſal, could effect nothing. The chiefs, finding their power diminiſhed by this regulation, had intereſt enough to get it aboliſhed, and obtained permiſſion to poſſeſs diſtinct property, lands, and villages. And, as theſe lands and villages depended on the Mamlouk governors, it was neceſſary to conciliate them, to prevent their oppreſſions. From that moment, the Beys acquired an aſcendancy over the ſoldiers, who, till then, had treated them with diſdain; and this could not but continually increaſe, ſince their governments procured them conſiderable riches. Theſe they employed in creating themſelves friends and creatures. They multiplied their ſlaves, and, after emancipating them, employed

ployed all their intereſt to advance them in the army, and promote them to various employments. Theſe upſtarts, retaining for their reſpective patrons the ſubmiſſive reverence uſual in the Eaſt, formed factions implicitly devoted to their pleaſure.

By ſuch means Ibrahim, one of the Kiayas, *(k)* or veteran colonels of the Janiſaries, about the year 1746, rendered himſelf, in reality, maſter of Egypt; he had ſo multiplied and advanced his freed men that, of the twenty-four Beys, which ſhould be their number, no leſs than eight were of his houſehold. His influence too was the more certain, as the Pacha always left vacancies in the number, in order to receive the emoluments. On the other hand, the largeſſes he beſtowed on the officers and ſoldiers of his corps, attached them to his intereſt, and Rodoan, the moſt powerful of the Azab colonels, uniting himſelf with him, completed his power.

The Pacha, incapable of oppoſing this faction, was now no more than a phantom,

(k) The military corps of the Janiſaries, Azabs, &c. were commanded by Kiayas, who, after the firſt year, laid down their employments, and became veterans, with a voice in the Divan.

and

and the orders of the Sultan vaniſhed before thoſe of Ibrahim. At his death, which happened in 1757, his houſe, that is, his enfranchiſed ſlaves, divided among themſelves, but united againſt all others, continued to give the law. Rodoan, who had ſucceeded his colleague, being expelled and ſlain by a party of young Beys, ſeveral chiefs followed each other in a very ſhort interval. At length, about the year 1766, Ali Bey, one of the principal actors in the troubles which attracted the attention of Europe for ſeveral years, gained a decided aſcendency over his rivals, and, under the titles of Emir-Hadj, and Shaik-el-Beled, rendered himſelf abſolute maſter of the country. The hiſtory of the Mamlouks being intimately connected with his, I ſhall continue the former, by giving an abſtract of the latter.

CHAP. VIII.

Summary of the History of Ali Bey (1).

THE birth of Ali Bey is subject to the same uncertainty as that of the Mamlouks in general, who, sold by their parents, or carried off by

(1) Since this chapter was written, M. Savary has published two more volumes on Egypt, in one of which is the life of this fame Ali Bey. I expected to have found in it particulars proper to verify or correct my own narrative; but what was my astonishment to perceive, we have hardly a single circumstance in common? This disagreement was so much the more unpleasing to me, since, as I have already differed from him on several other subjects, it may seem, to many readers, as if I made a practice of contradicting that traveller. But, besides that I am not personally acquainted with M. Savary, I protest, that such partiality is no part of my character. How then does it happen that, having been upon the same spot, having necessarily drawn our materials from like sources, our accounts should be so different? I confess I cannot well discover the reason; all I can say is, that, during the six months I lived at Cairo, I carefully enquired of such of our merchants, as, from long residence in the country, and being persons of understanding, appeared to me likely to give the most authentic testimony. I found

by their enemies, at a very early age, ſeldom remember much of their origin or their country; or if they do, conceal them. The opinion

I found them agreed on the principal facts, and I had the advantage of hearing the relations they gave me confirmed by a Venetian merchant (M. C. Roſetti) who was one of the confidential friends of Ali Bey, and the counſellor and promoter of his connections with the Ruſſians, and his projects reſpecting the commerce of India. In Syria I have met with great numbers who had been eye-witneſſes of the principal events in the hiſtory of Shaik-Daher and Ali Bey; and, from their teſtimony, have been able to aſcertain the degree of credit due to the information I received in Egypt. During eight months that I reſided among the Druzes, I learnt from the Biſhop of Aleppo, formerly Biſhop of Acre, a thouſand anecdotes, the more indubitable, as Ibrahim Sabbar, the Miniſter of Daher, was frequently in his houſe. In Paleſtine I have lived with Chriſtians and Muſſulmen, who had been officers under Daher, were at the firſt ſiege of Yafa (Joppa) with Ali Bey, and defended that place in the ſecond againſt Mohammad Bey. I have been on the ſpot, and examined all the neceſſary witneſſes. I have received hiſtorical notes from the Venetian agent at Yafa, who had a conſiderable ſhare in all theſe troubles. Theſe are the materials from which I have compiled my narrative. Not but I have met with ſome circumſtances which are differently related; but from ſuch what hiſtory is free? Are there not ten different relations of the battle of Fontenoy? All we can hope is to collect what is

opinion the moſt general reſpecting Ali is, that he was born among the Abazans, a people inhabiting Mount Caucaſus, and which furniſhes

moſt probable; for I cannot but confeſs I have myſelf been frequently convinced, on this occaſion, how difficult it is to aſcertain the real truth in any hiſtorical facts.

Not but I have heard before ſeveral of the ſtories related by M. Savary, who cannot be accuſed of having invented them himſelf, for his account is taken, word for word, from an Engliſh book, printed in 1783, and entitled *A Hiſtory of the Revolt of Ali Bey*, though there are only forty pages appropriated to that ſubject, the remainder being common-place remarks on the manners and geography of the country. I was at Cairo when the public papers gave an account of this work; and I well recollect that when our merchants heard of Maria, wife of Ali Bey; of the Greek Daoud, his father; and his finding his ſon, as Jacob found Joſeph, they were ſtrangely ſurpriſed, and laughed heartily at the tales trumped up in Europe. It is in vain, therefore, for the Engliſh Factor, who was in Egypt in 1771, to appeal to the authority of the Kiaya of Ali Bey, and a number of Beys, whom he conſulted, *without underſtanding Arabic*; he can never be looked upon as well informed. I ſuſpect him the more ſince he ſets out with an unpardonable error, in aſſerting that the country of Abaza is the ſame as that of Amaſea; for one of theſe is a country of Caucaſus, ſtretching towards the Cuban; and the other a city of ancient Cappadocia, or modern Natolia. To conclude, we may find at Paris

Memoirs

furniſhes the ſlaves in greateſt requeſt *(m)*. The merchants, who carry on this traffic, brought him to one of their annual ſales, at Cairo, were he was purchaſed by the brothers Iſaac and Youſef, Jews, employed in the cuſtom-houſe, who made a preſent of him to Ibrahim Kiaya. It is ſuppoſed he might then be about twelve or fourteen years old; but, in the Eaſt, neither Mahometans nor Chriſtians keeping any regiſters of births, their preciſe age is never known.

Ali performed for his patron the uſual ſervices of the Mamlouks, which are nearly ſimilar to thoſe of the pages to our Princes. He received the cuſtomary education, which conſiſts in learning to manage a horſe well, fire the carbine and piſtol, throw the djerid, uſe the

Memoirs of Ali Bey, collected by a perſon of diſtiction, who has been in Egypt, as well as M. Savary and myſelf, and thoſe Memoirs will ſatisfy all doubts which may remain on this ſubject.

(m) The Turks hold the Tcherkaſſes, or Circaſſian ſlaves, in the higheſt eſtimation; next to them the Abazans, next the Mingrelians, after them the Georgians, after them the Ruſſians and the Poles, next the Hungarians and the Germans, then the Negroes, and, laſt of all, the Spaniards, Malteſe, and other Franks, whom they deſpiſe as drunkards, debauchees, idle, and mutinous.

ſabre, and even a little reading and writing. In all theſe exerciſes he diſplayed an activity and fire which obtained him the ſurname of *Djendali*, or madman. But the ſolicitude of ambition ſoon moderated this exceſſive warmth. About the age of eighteen or twenty, his patron ſuffered him to let his beard grow, that is to ſay, gave him his freedom; for among the Turks, to want muſtachios and beard, is thought fit only for ſlaves and women; and hence ariſes the unfavourable impreſſion they receive on the firſt ſight of an European. When he had made him free, Ibrahim gave him a wife and revenues, promoted him to the rank of Kachef, or Governor of a diſtrict, and, at length, procured him to be elected one of the four-and-twenty Beys.

Theſe ſucceſſive promotions, and the power and riches he acquired, awakened the ambition of Ali Bey. The death of his patron, which happened in 1757, opened a free courſe for his projects. He engaged in every intrigue for raiſing or diſplacing the chiefs, and was the principal author of the ruin of Rodoan Kiaya. After Rodoan, various factions alternately advanced their leaders into his

his ſtation. He who occupied it in 1762, was Abd-el-Rahman, of little conſequence himſelf, but ſupported by ſeveral confederate houſes. Ali was then Shaik-el-Beled, and ſeized the moment when Abd-el-Rahman was conducting the caravan of Mecca to get him exiled; but he himſelf had his turn, and was condemned to retire to Gaza. Gaza, dependent on a Turkiſh Pacha, was neither ſo agreeable nor ſo ſecure a reſidence as to tempt him to make it his abode; he therefore only made a feint of taking that route, and, on the third day, turned towards the Said, where he was joined by his partizans.

He reſided two years at Djirdja, where he matured his plans for obtaining and ſecuring that power to which he ſo ardently aſpired. The friends his money had gained him at Cairo having at length procured his recall, in 1766, he appeared ſuddenly in that city, and, in one night, ſlew four Beys who were his enemies, exiled four others, and became, from that time, the chief of the moſt numerous party. As he had now poſſeſſed himſelf of the whole authority, he reſolved to employ it ſtill further to promote his ambitious views. No longer contented with the trivial title of

Bey, he could not ſubmit to the ſupremacy of the Porte, and aimed at nothing leſs than the title of Sultan of Egypt. To this object all his meaſures tended; he expelled the Pacha, who poſſeſſed only the ſhadow of power; he refuſed the accuſtomed tribute: and, in 1768, even proceeded to coin money in his own name *(n)*.

The Porte did not ſee without indignation theſe attacks on her authority; but open war alone could repel them, and circumſtances were not favourable. Daher, eſtabliſhed in Acre, kept Syria in awe; and the Divan of Conſtantinople, occupied with the affairs of Poland, and the pretenſions of Ruſſia, beſtowed its whole attention on the tranſactions in the North. The uſual method of *capidjis* was had recourſe to; but poiſon, or the poniard, always anticipated the bow-ſtring they bore. Ali Bey, availing himſelf of theſe circumſtances, puſhed forward his enterprizes with ſucceſs. For ſeveral years a port of the

(n) After the ruin of his affairs, his piaſters fell 20 per cent, becauſe it was pretended they were too much debaſed with alloy; but a merchant ſent ten thouſand of them to Marſeilles, and made a conſiderable profit by melting them down.

Said

Said had been occupied by Arab Shaiks under little ſubjection. One of them, named Hammam, had formed there a power capable of giving diſturbance. Ali began by delivering himſelf from this danger; and, under pretext that this Shaik concealed a treaſure entruſted to him by Ibrahim Kiaya, and that he harboured rebels, ſent a body of Mamlouks againſt him, in 1769, commanded by his favourite Mohammad Bey, who deſtroyed in one day both Hammam and his power.

The end of this year was productive of another expedition, which in its conſequences muſt have affected Europe. Ali Bey fitted out ſome veſſels at Suez, and, manning them with Mamlouks, ordered the Bey Haſſan to ſail with them to Djedda, (Gedda), the port of Mecca, which he was to ſeize on, while a body of cavalry, under the command of Mohammad Bey, marched by land to take poſſeſſion of Mecca itſelf, which was given up to plunder. His project was to render Djedda the emporium of the Indian commerce; and this plan, which was ſuggeſted by a young Venetian merchant, *(o)* who poſ-

(o) M. C. Roſetti; his brother, Balthazar Roſetti, was to be made commiſſioner of the cuſtoms at Djedda.

ſeſſed

ſeſſed his confidence, was to make Europe abandon the paſſage by the cape of Good Hope, by ſubſtituting the ancient route of the Mediterranean, and the Red Sea; but the event has proved that the attempt was too precipitate, and, that before gold is introduced into a country, laws ſhould be eſtabliſhed.

Ali, the vanquiſher of a petty prince of the Said, and conqueror of the huts of Mecca, from this time thought himſelf formed to command the whole world. His courtiers told him he was as powerful as the Sultan of Conſtantinople, and he believed his courtiers. Had he exerciſed his reaſon, he would have perceived that Egypt, compared with the reſt of the empire, conſtituted only a very inconſiderable ſtate, and that the ſeven or eight thouſand cavalry he commanded were nothing when oppoſed to a hundred thouſand Janiſaries, whom the Sultan has at his diſpoſal: but the Mamlouks know nothing of geography; and Ali, who viewed Egypt near, found it much larger than Turkey at a diſtance. He determined therefore to commence his conqueſts: Syria, which was in his neighbourhood, naturally preſented the firſt object, and every thing was favourable to his

his views. The war with the Ruſſians, which broke out in 1769, occupied all the Turkiſh forces in the north. Shaik Daher, in rebellion againſt the Porte, was a powerful and faithful ally; and the extortions of the Pacha of Damaſcus, by diſpoſing thoſe he oppreſſed to revolt, afforded the moſt favourable opportunity of invading his government, and meriting the title of the deliverer of nations.

Ali ſaw perfectly well the advantage of this poſture of affairs, and made no delay in putting his forces in motion. All his meaſures being at length taken, he detached, in 1770, under the command of five Beys, a corps of about five hundred Mamlouks, all cavalry, (for they never march on foot), and ſent them to take poſſeſſion of Gaza, in order to ſecure an entrance into Paleſtine. Oſman, Pacha of Damaſcus, no ſooner heard of the invaſion, than he flew to arms. The Mamlouks, terrified at his activity, and the number of his troops, held themſelves in readineſs to fly at the firſt attack; but Daher, the moſt indefatigable chief that Syria has ſeen for many centuries, haſtened from Acre, and extricated them from their embarraſſment. Oſman, who was encamped near Yafa, fled without even offering

offering battle; and Daher, making himſelf maſter of Yafa, Ramla, and all Paleſtine, opened a road for the grand army he expected.

This arrived about the end of February, 1771: and the gazettes of that time, ſtating it at ſixty thouſand men, induced Europe to believe it was an army ſimilar to thoſe of Ruſſia or Germany; but the Turks, and more eſpecially thoſe of Aſia, differ ſtill more from the Europeans in their military than their civil cuſtoms. Sixty thouſand men with them are very far from being ſynonimous with ſixty thouſand ſoldiers, as in our armies. That of which we are now ſpeaking affords a proof of this: it might amount in fact to forty thouſand men, which may be claſſed as follows. Five thouſand Mamlouk cavalry, which was the whole effective army; about fifteen hundred Barbary Arabs on foot, and no other infantry, for the Turks are acquainted with none; with them, the cavalry is every thing. Beſides theſe, each Mamlouk having in his ſuite two footmen, armed with ſtaves, theſe would form a body of ten thouſand valets; beſides a number of ſervants and ſerradjis, or attendants on horſeback, for the

Beys

Beys and Kachefs, which may be eſtimated at two thouſand: all the reſt were ſutlers, and the uſual train of followers.

Such was this army, as deſcribed to me in Paleſtine by perſons who had ſeen and followed it. It was commanded by the friend of Ali, Mohammad Bey, ſurnamed *Abouda-hab*, or father of gold, from the luxury of his tent and capariſons. As to order and diſcipline theſe muſt not be mentioned. The armies of the Turks and Mamlouks are nothing but a confuſed multitude of horſemen, without uniforms, on horſes of all ſizes and colours, riding without either keeping their ranks, or obſerving any regular order.

This rabble took the road to Acre, leaving, wherever they paſſed, ſufficient marks of their want of diſcipline and rapacity. At Acre, a junction was formed with the troops of Shaik Daher, which conſiſted of fifteen hundred Safadians *(p)*, on horſeback, and commanded by his ſon Ali; twelve hundred Motualis cavalry, having for their leader the Shaik Naſif, and about one thouſand Mograbian in-

(p) Daher's ſubjects were called by his name, becauſe his ſeat of government was originally at Safad, a village of Galilee.

fantry. This union effected, and their plan concerted, they proceeded towards Damaſcus ſome time in the month of April. Oſman had employed this interval in preparations, and had, on his ſide, collected an army equally numerous and ill-regulated. The Pachas of Said, *(q)* Tripoli, and Aleppo, had joined him with their forces, and were waiting for the enemy under the walls of Damaſcus.

The reader muſt not here figure to himſelf a number of complicated and artificial movements, ſuch as thoſe which within the laſt century, have reduced war with us to a ſcience of ſyſtem and calculation; the Aſiatics are unacquainted with the firſt elements of this conduct Their armies are mobs, their marches ravages, their campaigns mere inroads, and their battles, bloody frays; the ſtrongeſt or the moſt adventurous party goes in ſearch of the other, which not unfrequently flies without offering reſiſtance; if they ſtand their ground, they engage pell-mell, diſcharge their carbines, break their ſpears, and hack each other with

(q) Pronounced Sêde, in French; in Engliſh Said, as above; it is the ancient Sidon.

their ſabres, for they rarely have any cannon; and when they have they are but of little ſervice. A panic frequently diffuſes itſelf without cauſe; one party flies, the other purſues, and ſhouts victory: the vanquiſhed ſubmit to the will of the conqueror, and the campaign often terminates without a battle.

Such, in a great meaſure, were the military operations in Syria, in 1771. The combined army of Ali Bey and Daher marched to Damaſcus. The Pachas waited for them; they approached, and, on the 6th of June, a deciſive action took place; the Mamlouks and Safadians ruſhed with ſo much fury on the Turks, that, terrified at the carnage, they immediately took to flight, and the Pachas were not the laſt in endeavouring to make their eſcape. The allies became maſters of the country, and took poſſeſſion of the city without oppoſition, there being neither walls nor ſoldiers to defend it. The caſtle alone reſiſted. Its ruined fortifications had not a ſingle cannon, much leſs gunners; but it was ſurrounded by a muddy ditch, and behind the ruins were poſted a few muſqueteers, and theſe alone were ſufficient to check this army of cavalry. As the beſieged, however, were already

already conquered by their fears, they capitulated the third day, and the place was to be ſurrendered the next morning, when at day-break a moſt extraordinary revolution took place.

At the moment that the ſignal of ſurrender was expected, Mohammad ſuddenly commanded a retreat, and all his cavalry turned towards Egypt. In vain did the aſtoniſhed Ali-Daher and Naſif fly to demand the cauſe of ſo ſtrange a meaſure: the Mamlouk made no other reply to their reiterated queſtions, than a haughty menace; and the whole army decamped in confuſion. Nor was this merely a retreat, but a poſitive flight; they ſeemed as if hotly purſued by a victorious enemy; the road from Damaſcus to Cairo was covered with men on foot, ſcattered horſemen, and ſtores and baggage they had abandoned. This ſingular occurrence was attributed, at the time, to a pretended report of the death of Ali Bey; but the real ſolution of the enigma was a ſecret conference which paſſed at night in the tent of Mohammad Bey. Oſman, finding himſelf too weak to oppoſe theſe combined forces, had recourſe to artifice. He contrived to introduce to the Egyptian

Egyptian general a crafty agent, who, under pretence of propoſing terms of peace, endeavoured to diſſeminate diſcord and revolt. He inſinuated to Mohammad that the part he was acting was equally ill befitting his honour, and contrary to his intereſt; that he was deceived in imagining the Sultan would leave unpuniſhed the offences of Ali Bey; that it was a ſacrilege to violate ſo holy a city as Damaſcus, one of the two gates of the Caaba *(r)*; that he was aſtoniſhed that Mohammad ſhould prefer the favour of a ſlave of the Sultan, to that of the Sultan himſelf, and that he ſhould ſet up a ſecond maſter between him and his ſovereign; beſides, that it was evident this maſter, by daily expoſing him to new dangers, was ſacrificing him both to his own perſonal ambition, and to the jealouſy of his Kiaya, the Copt Rezk.

Theſe reaſons, and eſpecially the two latter, which were founded on indiſputable facts, made a ſtrong impreſſion on Mohammad and his Beys: they immediately held a

(r) The two great caravans which make the pilgrimage to Mecca, ſet out from Cairo and Damaſcus.

council, and ſwore ſolemnly, by the ſabre and the Koran, to return without delay to Cairo. In conſequence of this determination, they decamped ſo ſuddenly, and abandoned their conqueſts with ſuch precipitation, that the report of their coming preceded their arrival at Cairo only by ſix hours. Ali Bey was ſtruck with terror, and wiſhed to have puniſhed his general upon the ſpot; but Mohammad appeared ſo well ſupported, that it was impracticable to attempt any thing againſt his perſon; it was neceſſary to diſſemble, and Ali Bey ſubmitted to this with the leſs difficulty, as he owed his fortune to his diſſimulation much more than to his courage.

Though thus deprived, at one ſtroke, of the fruits of ſo expenſive a war, Ali Bey did not renounce his projects. He continued to ſend ſuccours to his ally, Daher, and prepared a ſecond army for the campaign of 1772; but fortune, weary of effecting more for him than his own abilities could have accompliſhed, ceaſed to favour him.

The firſt reverſe he experienced was in the loſs of ſeveral cayaſſes, or boats, loaded with rice, for Shaik Daher, which were taken by

by a Ruſſian privateer, within ſight of Damietta; but another, and ſtill more ſerious accident, was the eſcape of Mohammad Bey. Ali Bey could not eaſily forget the affair of Damaſcus; nevertheleſs, from the remains of that affection we retain for thoſe whom we have ſerved, he could not bring himſelf to reſolve on having recourſe to violence, when an expreſſion made uſe of by the Venetian merchant who enjoyed his confidence fixed his wavering reſolution.

"Have the Sultans of the Franks," ſaid Ali Bey, one day, to that European *(s)*, "children as rich as my ſon Mohammad?" "No, Seignior," replied the courtier, "they "are careful of that; for they think that "when children become too great, they are "often in haſte to enjoy their inheritance." This inſinuation went to the heart of Ali Bey. From that moment he beheld in Mohammad a dangerous rival, and reſolved his ruin. To effect this, without riſk, he firſt ſent directions to all the gates of Cairo, that no Mamlouk ſhould be ſuffered to paſs in the evening, or at night; he then ordered

(s) This anecdote I received from that merchant.

Mohammad into immediate exile in the Said. By theſe oppoſite orders he imagined Mohammad would be ſtopped at the gates, and that, the keepers taking him into cuſtody, he ſhould eaſily free himſelf from his fears; but chance diſconcerted theſe vague and timid meaſures. Mohammad, by ſome miſtake, was ſuppoſed to be charged with private orders from Ali. He and his retinue were allowed to paſs, and from this moment all was loſt. Ali Bey, informed of his flight, gave orders to purſue him; but Mohammad appeared ſo well prepared and determined that none dared attack him. He retired into the Said, foaming with rage, and thirſting for vengeance. Even after his arrival there, he had another narrow eſcape. Ayoub Bey, an officer of Ali's, feigning great deteſtation of the injuſtice of his maſter, received Mohammad with tranſport, and ſwore upon his ſabre and the Koran, to ſhare his fortune; but, a few days after, letters were intercepted from this ſame Ayoub, to Ali, in which he promiſed him, without delay, the head of his enemy. Mohammad, having diſcovered the plot, ſeized the traitor; and, after cutting off his hands

hands and tongue, ſent him to Cairo to receive the recompenſe of his patron.

The Mamlouks, however, wearied with the inſolence of Ali Bey, repaired in crowds to his rival; and, in about ſix weeks, Mohammad ſaw himſelf ſufficiently ſtrong to leave the Said, and march towards Cairo. Ali Bey, on his ſide, ſent his troops againſt him; but many of them likewiſe deſerted to the enemy: at length, in the month of April 1772, the armies had a rencounter in the plain of El-Maſateb, at the gates of Cairo, the iſſue of which was, that Mohammad and his party entered the city, ſabre in hand. Ali Bey, having barely time to make his eſcape with eight hundred of his Mamlouks, repaired to Gaza, for the firſt time in his life, and endeavoured to get to Acre, to join his ally, Daher; but the inhabitants of Nablous and Yafa cut off his retreat; and Daher himſelf was obliged to open him a paſſage. The Arab received him with that ſimplicity and frankneſs which in all ages have characterized that people, and conducted him to Acre. It was neceſſary to ſuccour Said (Sidon), then beſieged by the troops of Oſman, in conjunction with the Druzes. He

accordingly marched thither, accompanied by Ali. Their combined troops formed a body of about ſeven thouſand cavalry, and, at their approach, the Turks raiſed the ſiege, and retired to a place a league to the northward of the city, on the river Aoula. There, in July 1772, the moſt conſiderable and moſt methodical engagement of the whole war took place. The Turkiſh army, three times more numerous than that of the two allies, was entirely defeated. The ſeven Pachas who commanded it took to flight, and Said remained in the poſſeſſion of Daher, and his governor Degnizla.

Ali Bey and Daher, on their return to Acre, proceeded to chaſtiſe the inhabitants of Yafa, who had revolted that they might convert to their uſe the ammunition and clothing left there by one of Ali's fleets, before he was expelled from Cairo. The city, which was held by a Shaik of Nablous, ſhut its gates, and reſolved to ſtand the ſiege. This commenced in July, and laſted eight months, though Yafa had no other rampart than a mere garden-wall, without a ditch; but in Syria and Egypt they know ſtill leſs of carrying on a ſiege than of engagements

in

in the field; at length, however, the beſieged capitulated in February 1773.

Ali, now feeling himſelf diſengaged, thought of nothing but his return to Cairo. Daher offered to furniſh him with ſuccours; and the Ruſſians, with whom Ali had contracted an alliance, while treating of the affair of the privateer, promiſed to ſecond him: time however was neceſſary for collecting theſe ſcattered aids, and Ali became impatient. The promiſes of Rezk, his Kiaya and his oracle, rendered him ſtill more deſirous to be gone. This Copt never ceaſed aſſuring him that the hour of his return was come; that the aſpects of the ſtars were moſt propitious; and that the downfall of Mohammad was now moſt certain. Ali, who like all the Turks, believed firmly in aſtrology, and who put the greater faith in Rezk, becauſe he believed his predictions had been often verified, could no longer endure delay; and the news he received from Cairo completed his impatience.

In the beginning of April, letters were ſent him by his friends, in which they informed him that the people were tired of his ungrateful ſlave, and that nothing but his preſence was wanting to expel him. He

determined, therefore, to set out immediately, and, without giving the Russians time to arrive, departed with his Mamlouks, and fifteen hundred Safadians, commanded by Osman, the son of Daher; but he was ignorant that the letters from Cairo were a stratagem of Mohammad's, and that this Bey had extorted them by force, in order to deceive and lead him into the snare he was preparing. In fact, no sooner had Ali advanced into the desert which separates Gaza from Egypt, than he fell in, near Salakia, with a chosen body of a thousand Mamlouks, who were lying in ambush, waiting his arrival. This corps was commanded by the young Bey, Mourad, who, being enamoured of the wife of Ali Bey, had obtained a promise of her from Mohammad, in case he should bring him the head of that illustrious unfortunate. Scarcely did Mourad perceive the dust which announced the approach of his enemies before he rushed upon them with his Mamlouks, and threw them into confusion. To crown his good fortune, he met with Ali in the crowd, attacked, and wounded him in the forehead with a sabre, made him prisoner, and conducted him to Mohammad. The latter, who was encamped two leagues in the

the rear, received his former maſter with all that exaggerated repect which is ſo cuſtomary with the Turks, and that ſenſibility which perfidy knows ſo well how to feign. He provided a magnificent tent for him, ordered him to be taken the greateſt care of, ſtiled himſelf a thouſand times, "his ſlave, who "licked the duſt of his feet;" but the third day, this parade of politeneſs terminated by the death of Ali Bey, who died, according to ſome, of his wounds; or, as others report, by poiſon: the probability of both theſe accounts is ſo equal, that it is impoſſible to decide between them.

Thus terminated the enterprizes of this celebrated man, who for ſome time engaged the attention of Europe, and afforded many politicians hopes of a great revolution. That he was an extraordinary character, cannot be denied; but it is exaggeration to place him in the claſs of great men. The accounts given of him by witneſſes highly worthy credit, prove that though he poſſeſſed the ſeeds of great qualities, the want of culture prevented them from coming to maturity. Let us paſs over his credulity in aſtrology, which more frequently influenced his conduct

duct than more ſubſtantial motives; let us not mention his treacheries, his perjuries, the murders even of his benefactors *(t)*, by which he acquired, or maintained his power, the morality of a rude ſociety is doubtleſs leſs rigid than that of a well-regulated ſtate; but, judging ambitious men on their own principles, we ſhall find that Ali Bey either ill underſtood, or erroneouſly purſued his plan of greatneſs; and that it was he himſelf who paved the way for his own ruin. We are certainly juſtified in charging him with three errors: Firſt, that imprudent thirſt after conqueſt, which fruitleſsly exhauſted his revenue, and his forces, and made him neglect the interior adminiſtration of his own country. Secondly, the premature indolence to which he reſigned himſelf, executing nothing but by his lieutenants, which diminiſhed the reſpect entertained for his perſon by the Mamlouks, and encouraged the ſpirit of revolt. Thirdly, the exceſſive riches he ſhowered on his favourite, which procured him the influence he abuſed. Suppoſing Mohammad virtuous, ought not Ali

(t) Such as Saleh Bey.

to have dreaded the ſeduction of flatterers, who, in all countries, are the conſtant attendants on opulence? In Ali Bey, however, we muſt admire one quality, which diſtinguiſhes him from the multitude of tyrants who have governed Egypt: if a vicious education prevented him from knowing what true glory is, it is certain, at leaſt, he was animated with the deſire of obtaining it; and this was never the portion of vulgar minds. He wanted nothing but to be adviſed by thoſe who knew the true road to it; and among thoſe who are born to command, how few are there who merit this eulogium!

I cannot proceed without a few remarks on an obſervation I remember to have frequently heard made at Cairo. Thoſe among our merchants who had witneſſed the reign of Ali, and his downfall, after extolling his good government, his zeal for juſtice, and his beneficence to the Franks, never failed to expreſs their aſtoniſhment at his not being regretted by the people; and thence took occaſion to repeat thoſe charges of inconſtancy and ingratitude with which the orientals are uſually reproached; but, on maturely examining every

every circumſtance, this does not appear to me ſo extraordinary as it may at firſt ſeem.

In Egypt, as in every other country, the judgment of the people is guided by the penury or plenty in which they live; their love or hatred, their cenſure or applauſe, are meaſured by the eaſe or difficulty with which they can procure the means of ſubſiſtence, in conſequence of the adminiſtration of their rulers; nor can this be eſteemed an improper criterion. In vain may we tell them that the honour of the empire, the glory of the nation, the encouragement of commerce, and the improvement of the fine arts, require ſuch and ſuch meaſures; every thing is ſuperſeded by the neceſſaries of life; and when the multitude want bread, they have at leaſt a right to withhold their praiſe and admiration. Of what conſequence was it to the people of Egypt, that Ali Bey had conquered the Said, Mecca, and Syria, if theſe conqueſts only augmented, inſtead of relieving their burthens? The expences incurred by theſe wars, increaſed the contributions they were obliged to raiſe. The expedition againſt Mecca alone coſt twenty-ſix millions of French livres (above one million eighty-three

thouſand pounds), and the exportation of corn for the uſe of the armies, added to the monopoly of ſome merchants in favour, cauſed a famine, which deſolated the country during the whole of the years 1770 and 1771. When, therefore, the inhabitants of Cairo, and the peaſants in the villages, were dying with hunger, what wonder if they murmured againſt Ali Bey? Who can blame them for diſapproving of the commerce with India, if all its advantages were to center in a few hands? When Ali Bey expended two hundred and twenty-five thouſand livres (above nine thouſand pounds), in the uſeleſs handle of a *kandjar (u)*, though jewellers might applaud his magnificence, had not the people reaſon to deteſt his luxury? This liberality, which his courtiers called virtue, the people, at whoſe expence it was exerciſed, were juſtly entitled to ſtigmatize as vice. Had this man any merit in laviſhing what coſt him nothing? Was it an act of juſtice to gratify his favourite at the expence of the people, or repay with their money his private obligations, as in the caſe of his purveyor-

(u) A poniard carried in the belt.

general?

general *(x)*? It muſt be confeſſed, that the greateſt part of the actions of Ali Bey were founded much leſs on general principles of juſtice and humanity, than perſonal motives of vanity and ambition. Egypt, in his eyes, was his private property, and the people a vile herd of worthleſs animals, of whom he might diſpoſe at his pleaſure. Ought we then to be aſtoniſhed, if thoſe whom he treated like an imperious maſter have vilified his fame like mercenary malecontents?

(x) Ali Bey, ſetting out to go into exile, for he was exiled no leſs than three times, was encamped near Cairo, being allowed a delay of twenty-four hours, to pay his debts: a Janiſary, named Haſſan, to whom he owed five hundred ſequins (one hundred and fifty-ſix pounds), came to find him. Ali, thinking he wanted his money, began to make excuſes. But Haſſan, producing five hundred more ſequins, ſaid to him, "Thou "art in misfortune, take theſe alſo." Ali, confounded with this generoſity, ſwore, by the head of the Prophet, that, if ever he returned, he would beſtow on this man unexampled wealth; and, on his return, created him Purveyor-general: and though he was informed of the ſcandalous extortions of Haſſan, never even reprimanded him.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Summary of occurences from the death of Ali Bey to the year 1785.

SINCE the death of Ali Bey, the fate of the Egyptians has not been bettered; his ſucceſſors have not even imitated what was laudable in his conduct. Mohammad Bey, who ſucceeded him in April 1773, during a reign of two years, diſplayed nothing but the ferocity of a robber, and the baſeneſs of a traitor. To colour his ingratitude towards his patron, he at firſt pretended to be only the defender of the rights of the Sultan, and the miniſter of his will; he therefore remitted to Conſtantinople the tribute which had been interrupted for the laſt ſix years, and took the cuſtomary oath of unlimited obedience. He renewed his ſubmiſſion at the death of Ali Bey; and, under pretext of proving his loyalty to the Sultan, demanded permiſſion to make war on the Arab Daher. The Porte, who would gladly have ſolicited this, was happy to permit it as a favour: Mohammad was inveſted

with the title of Pacha of Cairo, and every thing immediately prepared for this expedition. It may be aſked what intereſt an Egyptian Governor could have in deſtroying the Arab Daher, in rebellion in Syria? But refined views of policy had no more ſhare in this than in other meaſures. It originated merely in private reſentment. Mohammad Bey could not forget a reproachful letter written to him by Daher, at the time of the revolution of Damaſcus, nor the part the Shaik had taken againſt him in his quarrel with Ali Bey. To hatred was added the proſpect of plunder. Ibrahim Sabbar *(y)*, Daher's Miniſter, was reputed to poſſeſs prodigious wealth; and the Egyptian, could he deſtroy Daher, hoped equally to gratify his avarice and revenge.

He did not heſitate, therefore, to undertake this war, and made his preparations with all the activity which hatred inſpires. He provided himſelf with an extraordinary train of artillery, procured foreign gunners, and gave the command of them to an Engliſhman,

(y) Sabbâr, with the *r* pronounced thick, which ſignifies *dyer*; with the ordinary *r*, it ſignifies *plumber*.

named

named Robinſon; he brought from Suez a cannon ſixteen feet in length, which had long remained uſeleſs; and, at length, in the month of February, 1776, appeared in Paleſtine, with an army equal to that he had formerly headed againſt Damaſcus. On his approach, Daher's forces, which occupied Gaza, deſpairing of being able to defend it, retired; he took poſſeſſion of it, and, without ſtopping, marched againſt Yafa. This town, which had a garriſon, and whoſe inhabitants were all inured to war, ſhewed more reſolution than Gaza, and determined to ſtand the ſiege. The hiſtory of this ſiege would well exemplify the ignorance of theſe countries in the art of war, as a few of the principal particulars will ſufficiently evince.

Yafa, the ancient Joppa, is ſituated on a part of the coaſt the general level of which is very little above the ſea. The city is built on an eminence, in the form of a ſugar-loaf, in height about one hundred and thirty feet perpendicular. The houſes, diſtributed on the declivity, appear riſing above each other, like the ſteps of an amphitheatre. On the ſummit is a ſmall citadel, which commands the town; the bottom of the hill is ſur-

rounded by a wall without a rampart, of twelve or fourteen feet high, and two or three in thickneſs. The battlements at the top are the only difference by which it is diſtinguiſhable from a common garden wall. This wall, which has no ditch, is environed by gardens, where lemons, oranges, and citrons, in this light ſoil, grow to a moſt prodigious ſize. Such was the city Mohammad undertook to beſiege. It was defended by five or ſix hundred Safadians, and as many inhabitants, who, at ſight of the enemy, armed themſelves with their ſabres and muſkets; they had likewiſe a few braſs cannon, twenty-four pounders, without carriages; theſe they mounted, as well as they could, on timbers prepared in a hurry; and, ſupplying the place of experience and addreſs by hatred and courage, replied to the ſummons of the enemy by menaces and muſket-ſhot.

Mohammad, finding he muſt have recourſe to force, formed his camp before the town; but was ſo little acquainted with the buſineſs in which he was engaged that he advanced within half cannon ſhot. The bullets, which ſhowered upon the tents, apprized him of his error; he retreated, and, by making a freſh experiment,

experiment, was convinced he was ſtill too near; at length he diſcovered the proper diſtance, and ſet up his tent, in which the moſt extravagant luxury was diſplayed. Around it, without any order, were pitched thoſe of the Mamlouks, while the Barbary Arabs formed huts with the trunks and branches of the orange and lemon trees, and the followers of the army arranged themſelves as they could: a few guards were diſtributed here and there, and, without making a ſingle entrenchment, they called themſelves encamped.

Batteries were now to be erected; and a ſpot of riſing ground was made choice of, to the ſouth-eaſtward of the town, where, behind ſome garden-walls, eight pieces of cannon were pointed, at two hundred paces from the town, and the firing began, notwithſtanding the muſquetry of the enemy, who, from the tops of the terraces, killed ſeveral of the gunners. This conduct will appear ſo ſingular in Europe, that the truth of it may be, perhaps, called in queſtion; but theſe things paſſed only eleven years ago; I have been on the ſpot, have ſeen many who were eye-witneſſes, and I eſteem it a duty, neither to alter for the better or the worſe, facts, by which the

character of a nation may ſo well be eſtimated.

It is evident, that a wall, only three feet thick, and without a rampart, muſt ſoon have a large breach made in it; and the queſtion was, not how to mount, but how to get through it. The Mamlouks were for doing it on horſeback; but they were made to comprehend that this was impoſſible; and they conſented, for the firſt time, to march on foot. It muſt have been a curious ſight to ſee them, with their huge breeches of thick Venetian cloth, embarraſſed with their tucked-up *beniſhes*, their crooked ſabres in hand, and piſtols hanging to their ſides, advancing, and tumbling among the ruins of the wall. They imagined they had conquered every difficulty when they had ſurmounted this obſtacle; but the beſieged, who formed a better judgment, waited till they arrived at the empty ſpace between the city and the wall; there they aſſailed them from the terraces, and the windows, of the houſes, with ſuch a ſhower of bullets, that the Mamlouks did not ſo much as think of ſetting them on fire, but retired, under a perſuaſion that the breach was utterly impracticable, ſince it was impoſſible

ſible to enter it on horſeback. Morad Bey brought them ſeveral times back to the charge, but in vain.

Six weeks paſſed in this manner, and Mohammad was diſtracted with rage, anxiety, and deſpair. The beſieged, however, whoſe numbers were diminiſhed by the repeated attacks, and who did not ſee that any ſuccours were to be expected from Acre, became weary of defending alone the cauſe of Daher. The Muſſulmen, eſpecially, complained, that the Chriſtians, regarding nothing but their prayers, were more in their churches than the field of battle. Some perſons began to treat with the enemy, and it was propoſed to abandon the place, on the Egyptians giving hoſtages. Conditions were agreed on, and the treaty might be conſidered as concluded, when, in the midſt of the ſecurity occaſioned by that belief, ſome Mamlouks entered the city; numbers followed them, and attempted to plunder; the inhabitants defended themſelves, and the attack recommenced: the whole army then ruſhed into the town, which ſuffered all the horrors of war: women and children, young and old, all were cut to pieces; and Mohammad, equally mean and

barbarous, cauſed a pyramid, formed of the heads of theſe unfortunate ſufferers, to be raiſed as a monument of his victory. *(z)* It is ſaid the number of theſe exceeded twelve hundred. This cataſtrophe, which happened the 19th of May, 1776, ſpread terror through the country. Shaik Daher himſelf fled from Acre, the government of which he left to his ſon Ali, whoſe intrepidity is ſtill celebrated in Syria, but whoſe glory is tarniſhed by his frequent rebellions againſt his father. Ali imagined, that Mohammad would pay reſpect to the treaty he had made with him; but the Mamlouk, being arrived at the gates of Acre, declared, the price of his friendſhip muſt be the head of Daher himſelf. Ali, finding himſelf deceived, refuſed to commit this parricide, and abandoned the town to the Egyptians, who gave it up to be plundered. The French merchants, with difficulty, procured an exemption, and ſoon ſaw themſelves in moſt imminent danger. Mohammad, informed that the wealth of Ibrahim, Kiaya of Daher, had been depo-

(z) See Memoirs of Baron de Tott, Part IV.

ſited

ſited with them, declared that, unleſs it was inſtantly delivered up, they ſhould all be put to death. The enſuing Sunday was the day appointed for this terrible reſearch, when fortune happily freed them and Syria from the impending danger, for Mohammad was ſeized with a malignant fever, and died, after two days illneſs, in the prime of his age *(a)*.

The Chriſtians of Syria are perſuaded his death was a puniſhment of the prophet Elias, whoſe church, on Mount Carmel, he had violated. They even affirm the prophet appeared to him ſeveral times in the form of an old man, and that Mohammad was afterwards continually exclaiming—"Take from "me that old man, who diſtreſſes and terrifies "me." But they who ſaw this General in his laſt moments, have reported at Cairo, to perſons worthy of credit, that this viſion, the effect of a delirium, originated from the reproaches of his conſcience on account of ſome private murders: indeed, the death of Mohammad may eaſily be accounted for from natural cauſes, and is to be attributed to the known unhealthineſs of the climate, exceſſive heat, immo-

(a) In the month of June, 1776.

derate fatigue, and the anxiety occaſioned by the ſiege of Yafa. It may not be improper to remark, in this place, that were we to write the memoirs of modern times, as dictated by the Chriſtians of Syria and Egypt, they would no leſs abound in prodigies and apparations, than the hiſtories of antiquity.

The death of Mohammad was no ſooner known than this whole army made a precipitate retreat, ſimilar to that of Damaſcus, and tumultuouſly took the road to Egypt. Morad Bey, who had acquired great credit by the favour of Mohammad, haſtened to regain Cairo, that he might be enabled to diſpute the ſupreme command with Ibrahim Bey. The latter, alſo a freed-man and favourite of the deceaſed, no ſooner learnt the ſtate of affairs, than he took meaſures to ſecure an authority with which he had been entruſted in the abſence of his patron. Every appearance threatened open war; but the two rivals, when each came to conſider the power and reſources of the other, found themſelves ſo equal, as to make them dread the iſſue of a combat. They determined therefore on peace, and entered into an agreement, by which the authority was to be divided, on condition that Ibrahim ſhould re-

tain the title of Shaik-el-Beled: this arrangement was dictated by their common intereſt. Since the death of Ali Bey, the Beys and Cachefs, who owed their promotion to his houſe *(b)*, had repined in ſecret at ſeeing all the authority paſſed into the hands of a new faction: the power poſſeſſed by Mohammad, formerly their equal, had hurt their pride, and that of his ſlaves appeared to them ſtill more inſupportable: they reſolved, therefore, to ſhake off this yoke, and entered into intrigues and cabals, which terminated in a union of the parties under the title of the Houſe of Ali Bey. The chiefs were Haſſan Bey, formerly Governor of Djedda, and ſurnamed, on that account, El-djed-daoui; and Iſmael, the only remaining Bey of thoſe created by Ibrahim Kiaya. Theſe confederates conducted their plot ſo well that Morad and Ibrahim were obliged to abandon Cairo, and retire into the Said, where they were exiled; but, being ſoon reinforced by the refugees, who joined them, they returned, and routed their enemies, who were three

(b) That is to ſay, of whom he had been the patron: among the Mamlouks, the freed-man is called the child of the *houſe*.

times

times their number. Iſmael and Haſſan, expelled in their turn, fled into the Said, where they ſtill remain. Morad and Ibrahim, jealous of this party, have made ſeveral efforts to deſtroy it, without ſucceſs. They at laſt granted to the rebels a diſtrict above Djirdja; but the Mamlouks, who continually long for the luxuries of Cairo, having made ſome movements in 1783, Morad Bey thought it neceſſary to make a freſh attempt to exterminate them, and I arrived at the time when he was making his preparations. His adherents, diſperſed along the Nile, ſtopped all the boats they met, and, ſtaff-in-hand, forced the wretched proprietors to follow them to Cairo. Every body fled from a ſervice which was to produce them no profit. In the city a contribution of five hundred thouſand dollars *(c)* was impoſed upon commerce; the bakers and different tradeſmen were compelled to furniſh their commodities below prime coſt, and all theſe extortions, ſo odious in Europe, were deemed mere matters of courſe in Egypt.

Every thing was ready in the beginning of

(c) Two million, ſix hundred and twenty-five thouſand livres, (109,375*l.*)

April,

April, and Morad ſet out for the Said. The advices from Conſtantinople, and the gazettes of Europe, which re-echoed them, repreſented this expedition, at the time, as an important war, and the force of Morad as a powerful army, and it was ſo relatively to the forces he could raiſe, and the ſituation of Egypt; but it is no leſs true that it did not exceed two thouſand horſemen. To obſerve the conſtant falſification of news at Conſtantinople, one would believe, either that the Turks of the capital are wholly ignorant of the affairs of Egypt and Syria, or that they wiſh to impoſe on the Europeans. The little communication there is between them and theſe remote provinces of the empire renders the former ſuppoſition more probable than the latter. On the other hand, it ſhould ſeem as if our merchants, who reſide in the different factories, might procure us authentic information; but they, ſhut up in their kans, as in priſons, concern themſelves but little with what is foreign to their commerce, and content themſelves with laughing at the newſpapers they receive from Europe. Sometimes they have attempted to rectify theſe errors; but their information was ſo ill-employed,

ployed, that they have abandoned ſo troubleſome and unprofitable an undertaking.

Morad, leaving Cairo, led his cavalry, by forced marches, along the river; his baggage and ſtores followed him in boats; and the north-wind, which is always moſt prevalent, was favourable to his deſigns. The exiles, to the number of five hundred, were poſted above Djirdja. They no ſooner were apprized of the enemy's approach than they became a prey to diſſenſion; ſome were for fighting, and others adviſed to capitulate; ſeveral of them even adopted the latter meaſure, and ſurrendered to Morad Bey: but Haſſan and Iſmael, continuing inflexible, removed up the river towards Aſouan, followed by about two hundred and fifty horſe. Morad purſued them almoſt to the Cataract, where they took poſt ſo advantageouſly, on rocky precipices, that the Mamlouks, utterly ignorant how to conduct a war of poſts, held it impoſſible to force them. Beſides, Morad, dreading leſt too long an abſence from Cairo might give encouragement to new projects, haſtened to return thither; and the exiles, delivered from their embarraſſment, returned likewiſe to their former ſtation in the Said.

In

In a ſociety where the paſſions of individuals are not directed to one general end, where each man, attentive only to himſelf, conſiders the uncertainty of the next day, merely as a motive to improve the advantage of the moment; where the chiefs, impreſſing no ſentiment of reſpect, are unable to maintain ſubordination; in ſuch a ſociety, a fixed and regular ſtate of affairs is impoſſible; and the inceſſant jarring of the incoherent parts muſt give a perpetual vibration to the whole machine. This is what continually happens among the body of the Mamlouks at Cairo. Scarcely was Morad returned, when a new combination of intereſts excited new troubles. Beſides his faction, and thoſe of Ibrahim, and the houſe of Ali Bey, there were, at Cairo, other Beys allied to other houſes. Theſe Beys, who from their individual weakneſs were neglected by the ruling Beys, thought proper, in the month of July, 1783, to unite their hitherto detached forces, and form a party, which alſo had its pretenſions to ſovereign power. This league, however, was diſcovered too ſoon, and the leaders, to the number of five, found themſelves unexpectedly exiled to the Delta. To this order they feigned ſubmiſſion;

miſſion; but they had ſcarcely left the city, before they took the route of the Said, the uſual and convenient aſylum of all the male-contents: they were purſued to no purpoſe for a day, through the deſert of the Pyramids; but they eſcaped both the Mamlouks and Arabs, and arrived ſafe at Miniah, where they took up their reſidence.

This village, ſituated forty leagues above Cairo, on the banks of the Nile, which it commands, was well calculated to promote their deſigns. Maſters of the river, they could ſtop every thing which came from the Said; and they availed themſelves of this advantage: the corn, annually ſent from that province, at this ſeaſon, was a favourable circumſtance; this they ſeized; and Cairo, deprived of proviſions, was in danger of a famine; while the Beys, and others whoſe lands lay in, or beyond, the province of Fayoum, no longer received their revenues, as the exiles had laid them under contribution. To remove theſe evils, a new expedition was neceſſary. Morad Bey, fatigued with the former, refuſed to undertake a ſecond; and Ibrahim Bey took it on himſelf. In the month of Auguſt, notwithſtanding

ſtanding the Ramadan, the preparations were begun; all the boats, and their owners, were ſeized on, as before. Contributions were levied, and the dealers compelled to ſupply the troops.

At length, in the beginning of October, Ibrahim ſet out with an army which was thought formidable, ſince it conſiſted of about three thouſand cavalry. It was reſolved to go down the Nile, the waters of the inundation having not yet left the whole country, and the ground continuing to be marſhy. In a few days the armies came in ſight of each other; but Ibrahim, who had not the ſame fondneſs for war with Morad, did not attack the confederates; he entered into a negociation, and concluded a verbal treaty, the conditions of which were the return of the Beys, and their re-eſtabliſhment. Morad, who ſuſpected ſome plot againſt himſelf, was much diſſatisfied with this convention; diſtruſt took place more than ever between him and his rival; and the arrogance diſplayed by the exiles, in a general Divan, ſtill more increaſed his fears. He thought himſelf betrayed, and, to ſecure himſelf from treachery, ſet out from Cairo with his ad-

herents, and retired into the Said. Open war was expected to be the conſequence, but Ibrahim temporized, and, at the end of four months, Morad advanced to Djiza, as if to decide the quarrel by a battle.

For five-and-twenty days the two parties, ſeparated by the river, remained oppoſite each other, without attempting any thing. A treaty was propoſed, but Morad, diſſatiſfied with the conditions, and too weak to dictate others, returned into the Said, whither he was followed by deputies, who, after four months negociation, at length ſucceeded in bringing him back to Cairo: the conditions ſtipulated were, that he ſhould continue to ſhare the authority with Ibrahim, and that the five Beys ſhould be deprived of their poſſeſſions. Theſe Beys, perceiving they were given up by Ibrahim, took to flight; Morad purſued them, and the Arabs of the deſert having taken them, he brought them back to Cairo, that they might be under his eye. Peace now ſeemed re-eſtabliſhed; but what had paſſed between the two chiefs had too clearly manifeſted their reſpective views to ſuffer them to continue friends; and each, well convinced that his rival was only watching

ing an opportunity to deſtroy him, kept conſtantly on his guard, either to avoid or endeavour a ſurprize.

Theſe ſecret machinations obliged Morad Bey again to quit Cairo, in 1784; but, forming his camp cloſe to the gates, he appeared ſo determined, that Ibrahim, terrified in his turn, fled with his partiſans into the Said, where he remained till March 1785, when, in conſequence of a new treaty, he returned to Cairo, where he now ſhares, as formerly, the ſupreme authority with his rival, until ſome freſh intrigue ſhall afford him an opportunity of taking his revenge.

Such is the ſummary of the revolutions which have taken place in Egypt for ſome years paſt. I have not circumſtantially related the various incidents of theſe events, becauſe, not to mention their uncertainty, they can neither intereſt nor convey information. The whole is a tiſſue of cabals, intrigues, treachery, and murthers, which could only weary the reader in the repetition; it is ſufficient if he is acquainted with the leading facts, and is enabled from them to form juſt ideas of the manners and political ſtate of the country, which ſubject I ſhall now proceed to diſcuſs more amply.

CHAP. X.

Preſent State of Egypt.

SINCE the revolution of Ibrahim Kiaya, and eſpecially ſince the revolt of Ali Bey, the Ottoman power has become more precarious in Egypt than in any other province. It is true the Porte ſtill retains there a Pacha; but this Pacha, confined and watched in the caſtle of Cairo, is rather the priſoner of the Mamlouks, than the repreſentative of the Sultan. He is depoſed, exiled, or expelled at pleaſure; and, on the mere ſummons of a herald, clothed in black *(d)*, muſt deſcend *(e)* from his high ſtation. Some Pachas, choſen expreſsly for that purpoſe by the Porte, have endeavoured, by ſecret intrigues, to recover the power formerly annexed to their title; but the Beys have rendered all ſuch attempts ſo dangerous, that they now ſubmit quietly to their three years captivity, and confine themſelves to the peaceable enjoyment of their ſalary and emoluments.

(d) This officer is named *Caracoulouk.*

(e) The formulary of depoſition conſiſts in the word *enzel*, that is, *deſcend* from the caſtle.

The

The Beys, however, apprehenſive of driving the Porte to adopt ſome violent meaſure, dare not declare their independence. Every thing continues to be tranſacted in the name of the Sultan; his orders are received, as they expreſs it, *on the head and on the eyes*; that is with the greateſt reſpect; but this ridiculous appearance of reverence is never followed by obedience. The tribute is frequently intermitted, and always undergoes great deductions. Various expences are carried to account, ſuch as the maintenance of the canals, the carriage of the rubbiſh of Cairo to the ſea, the pay of the troops, the repair of the moſques, &c. &c. which are all ſo many falſe and fraudulent charges. Deceit is practiſed reſpecting the degree of inundation; and nothing ſhort of the dread inſpired by the Turkiſh Caravelles, which come annually to Damietta and Alexandria, could procure the contribution of rice and grain: even in this too, means are found to diminiſh the effective ſupplies, by a colluſion with thoſe appointed to receive them. On the other hand, the Porte, abiding by her uſual policy, is blind to all theſe abuſes, well knowing, that to correct them, will require expenſive efforts, and poſ-

ſibly an open war, in which the dignity of the empire might ſuffer conſiderably. Other, and more urgent affairs, have, beſides, for ſome years paſt, made it abſolutely neceſſary for the Turks to collect all their forces towards the North. Obliged to beſtow all their attention on their immediate ſafety in Conſtantinople, they leave the reſtoration of their authority in the diſtant provinces to time, and the courſe of events. They take care, however, to foment diviſions among the rival parties, that none of them may acquire an eſtabliſhed power; and this method has been found equally beneficial to the ſtate, and advantageous to the great officers, who derive large profits from the rebels, by ſelling them their influence and protection. The preſent Admiral, Haſan Pacha, has more than once availed himſelf of this practice, ſo as to obtain conſiderable ſums from Ibrahim and Morad.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Military Conſtitution of the Mamlouks.

THE Mamlouks, on obtaining the government of Egypt, adopted meaſures which ſeem to ſecure to them the poſſeſſion of the country. The moſt efficacious is the precaution they have taken to degrade the military corps of the Azabs and Janiſſaries: Theſe two bodies, which were formerly the terror of the Pacha, are now as inſignificant as himſelf. Of this the corrupt and wretched government of the Turks has alone been the cauſe; for, previous to the inſurrection of Ibrahim Kiaya, the number of Turkiſh troops, which ſhould conſiſt of forty thouſand men, infantry and cavalry, had been reduced to leſs than half that number, by the avarice of their officers, who diverted the pay to their own uſe. After Ibrahim, Ali Bey completely deſtroyed their conſequence. He firſt diſplaced all the officers who gave him umbrage; left unfilled the places that became

vacant; deprived the commanders of all influence; and so degraded all the Turkish troops, that at this day the Janissaries, the Azabs, and the five other corps, are only a rabble of artizans and vagabonds, who guard the gates of those who pay them, and tremble in the presence of the Mamlouks, as much as the populace of Cairo. The whole military force of Egypt really consists in the Mamlouks. Some hundreds of these are dispersed throughout the country, and in the villages, to maintain the authority of their corps, collect the tributes, and improve every opportunity of extortion; but the main body continually remains at Cairo. From the computation of well-informed persons, it appears, their number cannot exceed eight thousand five hundred men, reckoning Beys and Cachefs, common freed-men, and Mamlouks who are still slaves. In this number there are a multitude of youth under twenty and twenty-two years of age.

The most powerful house is that of Ibrahim Bey, who has about six hundred Mamlouks. Next to him is Mourad, who has not above four hundred, but who, by his audacity and prodigality, forms a counter-

poiſe to the inſatiable avarice of his rival: the reſt of the Beys, to the number of eighteen or twenty, have each of them from fifty to two hundred. Beſides theſe, there is a great number of Mamlouks who may be called *individual*, who, being ſprung from houſes which are extinct, attach themſelves ſometimes to one, and ſometimes to another, as they find it their intereſt, and are always ready to enter into the ſervice of the beſt bidder. We muſt reckon likewiſe ſome Serradjes, a ſort of domeſtics on horſeback, who carry the orders of the Beys; but the whole together does not exceed ten thouſand horſe. No mention is here made of infantry, which is neither known nor eſteemed in Turkey, eſpecially in the Aſiatic provinces. The prejudices of the ancient Perſians, and of the Tartars, ſtill prevail in thoſe countries, where war, conſiſting only in flight and purſuit, the horſeman, who is beſt qualified for both theſe, is reputed the only ſoldier; and as, among Barbarians, the warrior is alone the man of diſtinction; to walk on foot is held to be degrading, and is, for that reaſon reſerved for the common people. The Mamlouks, therefore, permit the inhabitants of

Egypt to be carried only by mules or aſſes *(f)*, reſerving to themſelves the excluſive privilege of riding on horſeback; and of this they make ſufficient uſe; for whether they are in town or the country, or if they only make a viſit to the next door, they are never ſeen but on horſeback. Their dreſs, as well as the ſupport of their dignity, obliges them to this. This dreſs, which does not differ from that of every other perſon in eaſy circumſtances in Turkey, deſerves to be deſcribed.

SECT. I.

Dreſs of the Mamlouks.

Firſt, they have a wide ſhirt of thin cotton, of a yellowiſh colour, over which they wear a ſort of gown of Indian linen, or the

(f) The Franks of all nations are ſubjected to the ſame humiliating reſtriction, but, by proper management, and liberal preſents, this may be got over by ſtrangers of conſequence, who come only to viſit the country. *Lord Algernon Percy*, now *Lord Louvaine*, and the *Earl of Charlemont*, obtained permiſſion to ride on horſeback in 1776.——See Colonel Capper's excellent little work, p. 31. T.

light

light ſtuffs of Damaſcus and Aleppo. This robe, called *antari*, deſcends from the neck to the ankles, and folds over the fore-part of the body, towards the hips, where it is faſtened by two ſtrings. Over this firſt covering is a ſecond, of the ſame form and width, the ample ſleeves of which deſcend likewiſe to the finger ends. This is called a *coftan*, and is uſually made of ſilk ſtuff, richer than the former. Both theſe are faſtened at the waiſt by a long belt, which divides the whole dreſs into two bundles. Above them is a third, which is called *djouba*, which is of cloth without lining, and is made nearly in the ſame manner, only the ſleeves are cut at the elbow. In winter, nay frequently even in ſummer, this djouba is lined with fur, and is converted into a peliſſe. Laſtly, over theſe three wrappers, they put on an outer garment, called the *beniſhe*. This is the cloke or robe of ceremony, and completely covers the whole body, even the ends of the fingers, which it would be deemed highly indecent to ſuffer to appear before the great. The whole habit, when the beniſhe is on, has the appearance of a long ſack, from out of which is thruſt a bare

bare neck, and a bald head, covered with a turban. The turban of the Mamlouks, called a *Kaouk*, is of a cylindrical ſhape, yellow, and turned up on the outſide with a roll of muſlin artificially folded. On their feet, they wear a ſock of yellow leather, which reaches up to the heels, and ſlippers without quarters, always liable to be left on the road. But the moſt ſingular part of this dreſs is a ſort of pantaloon, or trowſers, ſo long as to reach up to the chin, and ſo wide, that each of the legs is large enough to contain the whole body, and made of that kind of Venetian cloth which the French call *ſaille*, which, although as pliant as the *d'Elbœuf* cloth, is thicker than the *burre* of Rouen; and that they may walk more at their eaſe, they faſten, with a running faſh, all the looſe parts of the dreſs I have been deſcribing. Thus ſwaddled, we may imagine the Mamlouks are not very active walkers; and thoſe who are not acquainted by experience with the prejudices of different countries, will find it ſcarcely poſſible to believe, what however is the fact, that they look on this dreſs as exceedingly commodious. In vain may we object that it hinders them from walking,

and

and encumbers them, unneceſſarily, on horſe-back, and that in battle a horſeman, once diſmounted, is a loſt man; they reply, *It is the cuſtom*, and every objection is anſwered.

SECT. II.

Horſe accoutrements of the Mamlouks.

Let us now examine, whether their horſe accoutrements are more rational. Since the Europeans have had the good ſenſe to examine the principles of every art, they have found that the horſe, in order to move freely under his rider, ſhould be as little harneſſed as the ſolidity neceſſary would permit. This improvement, which has taken place among us in the eighteenth century, is ſtill very far from being adopted by the Mamlouks, who have ſcarcely arrived at the knowledge of the ninth. Continually the ſlaves of cuſtom, the horſe's ſaddle among them is a clumſy frame, loaded with wood, leather, and iron, on which a truſſequin riſes behind, eight inches in height above the hips of the horſeman. A pummel before projects four or five inches, ſo as to endanger his

his breaſt, ſhould he ſtoop. Under the ſaddle, inſtead of a ſtuffed frame, they ſpread three thick woollen coverings, and the whole is faſtened by a ſurcingle, which, inſtead of a buckle, is tied with leather thongs, in very complicated knots, and liable to ſlip. They uſe no crupper, but have a large martingale, which throws them on the ſhoulders of the horſe. Each ſtirrup is a plate of copper longer and wider than the foot, with circular edges, an inch high in the middle and gradually declining toward each end; the edges are ſharp, and are uſed inſtead of ſpurs, to make long wounds in the horſe's ſides. The common weight of a pair of theſe ſtirrups is between nine and ten pounds, and frequently exceeds twelve or thirteen. The ſaddle and ſaddle-cloths do not weigh leſs than five-and-twenty; thus the horſe's furniture weighs above ſix-and-thirty pounds, which is ſo much the more ridiculous, as the Egyptian horſes are very ſmall.

The bridle is equally ill contrived; it is a kind of ſnaffle, but without a joint, and with a curb, which, being only an iron ring, binds the jaw ſo as to lacerate the ſkin, ſo that the bars are injured, and the horſe abſolutely

ſolutely has no mouth. This neceſſarily reſults from the practice of the Mamlouks, who, inſtead of managing the mouth, like us, deſtroy it by violent and ſudden checks, which they employ particularly in a manœuvre peculiar to them. This conſiſts in putting the horſe on a full gallop, and ſuddenly ſtopping him, when at his higheſt ſpeed. Checked thus by the bit, the horſe bends in his hind legs, ſtiffens the fore, and ſlides along like a horſe of wood. How much this manœuvre muſt injure the legs and mouth may eaſily be conceived; but the Mamlouks think it graceful, and it is adapted to their mode of fighting. Notwithſtanding however their ſhort ſtirrups, and the perpetual motion of their bodies, it cannot be denied that they are firm and vigorous horſemen, and that they have a warlike appearance, which pleaſes the eye even of a ſtranger; it muſt alſo be allowed, they have ſhewn more judgment in the choice of their arms.

SECT. III.

Arms of the Mamlouks.

Their principal weapon is an Engliſh carbine, about thirty inches long, and of ſo large a bore as to diſcharge ten or twelve balls at a time, which, even without ſkill, cannot fail of great execution. They beſides carry at their belt two large piſtols, which are faſtened to ſome part of their garments by a ſilk ſtring. At the bow of the ſaddle ſometimes hangs a heavy mace, to knock down their enemy, and on the left thigh is ſuſpended, by a ſhoulder-belt, a crooked ſabre, of a kind little known in Europe; the length of the blade, in a right line, from the hilt to the point, is not more than twenty-four inches, but meaſured in the curve is at leaſt thirty. This form, which appears whimſical to us, has not been adopted without motives; experience teaches us, that the effect of a ſtrait blade is limited to the place and moment of its fall, as it acts merely from preſſure: a crooked blade, on the contrary, preſenting its edge in retiring,

tiring, ſlides by the effort of the arm, and continues its action longer. The Barbarians, who generally apply themſelves moſt to the deſtructive arts, have not ſuffered this obſervation to eſcape them; and hence the uſe of ſcymetars, ſo general and ſo ancient in the Eaſtern world. The Mamlouks commonly procure theirs from Conſtantinople, and from Europe; but the Beys rival each other in Perſian blades, and in ſabres of the ancient ſteel of Damaſcus *(g)*, for which they frequently pay as high as forty or fifty pounds ſterling. The qualities they eſteem in them are lightneſs, the equality and ring of the temper, the waving of the iron, and, above all, the keenneſs of the edge, which it muſt be allowed is exquiſite; but theſe blades have the defect of being as brittle as glaſs.

SECT. IV.

Education and Exerciſes of the Mamlouks.

The art of uſing theſe arms conſtitutes the education of the Mamlouks, and the whole occupation of their lives. Every day, early

(g) I ſay ancient, for ſteel is now no longer made there.

in

in the morning, the greater part of them resort to a plain, without Cairo, and there, riding full speed, exercise themselves in drawing out their carbine expeditiously from the bandaleer, discharging it with good aim, and then throwing it under their thigh, to seize a pistol, which they fire and throw over their shoulder; immediately firing a second, and throwing it in the same manner, trusting to the string by which they are fastened, without losing time to return them to their place. The Beys who are present encourage them; and whoever breaks the earthen vessel which serves by way of butt, receives great commendations and money, as a recompense. They practise also the management of the sabre, and especially the *coup de revers* which cuts upwards, and is the most difficult to parry. Their blades are so keen, and they handle them so well, that many of them can cut a clew of wet cotton, like a piece of butter. They likewise shoot with bows and arrows, though they no longer use them in battle. But their favourite exercise is throwing the *djerid:* this word, which properly means a reed, is generally used to signify any staff thrown by the hand, after the manner of the

the Roman pilum. Inſtead of a ſtaff, the Mamlouks make uſe of branches of the palm-tree, freſh ſtripped. Theſe branches, which have the form of the ſtalk of an artichoke, are four feet long, and weigh five or ſix pounds. Armed with theſe, the Cavaliers enter the liſts, and, riding full ſpeed, throw them at each other from a conſiderable diſtance. The aſſailant, as ſoon as he has thrown, turns his horſe, and his antagoniſt purſues, and throws his in his turn. The horſes, accuſtomed to this exerciſe, ſecond their maſters ſo well, that they ſeem alſo to ſhare in the pleaſure. But this pleaſure is attended with danger; for ſome can dart this weapon with ſo much force, as frequently to wound, and ſometimes mortally. Ill-fated was the man who could not eſcape the djerid of Ali Bey! Theſe ſports which to us ſeem barbarous, are intimately connected with the political ſtate of nations. Not three centuries ago they exiſted among ourſelves, and their being laid aſide is leſs owing to the accident of Henry the Second, or to a ſpirit of philoſophy, than to the ſtate of internal peace which has rendered them uſeleſs. Among

the Turks and Mamlouks, on the contrary, they are retained, becauſe the anarchy in which they live continues to render whatever relates to the art of war abſolutely neceſſary. Let us now conſider whether their progreſs in this art be proportionate to their practice.

SECT. V.

Military Skill of the Mamlouks.

In Europe, when we hear of troops, and of war, we immediately figure to ourſelves a number of men diſtributed into companies, battalions, and ſquadrons; with uniforms well fitted, and of different colours, ranks and lines formed, combinations of particular manœuvres, or general evolutions; and, in a word, a complete ſyſtem of operations founded on eſtabliſhed principles. Theſe ideas are juſt, relative to ourſelves, but, when applied to the countries of which we are treating, are erroneous indeed. The Mamlouks know nothing of our military arts; they have neither uniforms, nor order, nor diſcipline, nor even ſubordination. Their troops are a mob,

their

their march a riot, their battles duels, and their war a ſcene of robbery and plunder, which ordinarily begins even in the very city of Cairo; and, at the moment when there is the leaſt reaſon to expect it. A cabal gathers together, the Beys mount on horſeback, the alarm ſpreads, and their adverſaries appear: they charge each other in the ſtreet, ſabre in hand: a few murthers decide the quarrel, and the weakeſt or moſt timid is exiled. The people are mere cyphers in theſe affrays. Of what importance is it to them that their tyrants cut each others throats? But it muſt not be imagined that they ſtand by indifferent ſpectators, that would be too dangerous in the midſt of bullets and ſcymetars; every one makes his eſcape from the ſcene of action till tranquillity is reſtored. Sometimes the populace pillage the houſes of the exiled, which the conquerors never attempt to prevent. And it will not be improper here to obſerve, that the phraſes employed in the European Gazettes, ſuch as "*The Beys have* "*raiſed recruits, the Beys have excited the* "*people to revolt, the Beys have favoured this* "*or that party,*" are ill calculated to furniſh accurate ideas. In the differences of the Beys,

the people are never any thing more than merely paſſive inſtruments.

Sometimes the war is transferred to the country, but the art and conduct of the combatants is not more conſpicuous. The ſtrongeſt, or moſt daring party purſues the other. If they are equal in courage, they wait for each other, or appoint a rendezvous, where, without regarding the advantages of ſituation, the reſpective troops aſſemble in platoons, the boldeſt marching at their head. They advance towards their enemies, mutual defiances paſs, the attack begins, and every one chooſes his man: they fire, if they can, and preſently fall on with the ſabre: it is then the manageableneſs of the horſe and dexterity of the cavalier are diſplayed. If the former falls, the deſtruction of the latter is inevitable. In defeats, the valets, who are always preſent, remount their maſters; and if there are no witneſſes near, frequently knock them on the head to get the ſequins they happen to have about them. The battle is often decided by the death of two or three of the combatants. Of late years, eſpecially, the Mamlouks ſeem convinced, that as their patrons are the perſons principally intereſted, they

they ought to encounter the greateſt dangers, and therefore preſently leave them the enjoyment of that honour. If they gain the advantage, ſo much the better for all concerned; if they are overcome, they capitulate with the conqueror, who frequently makes his conditions before hand. There is nothing to be gained but by remaining quiet; they are ſure of finding a maſter who pays, and they return to Cairo to live at his expence until ſome new revolution takes place.

SECT. VI.

Diſcipline of the Mamlouks.

The intereſted and inconſtant character of this militia, is a neceſſary conſequence of its origin and conſtitution. The young peaſant, ſold in Mingrelia or Georgia, no ſooner arrives in Egypt, than his ideas undergo a total alteration. A new and extraordinary ſcene opens before him, where every thing conduces to awaken his audacity and ambition; though now a ſlave, he ſeems deſtined to become a maſter, and already aſſumes the

ſpirit of his future condition. He calculates how far he is neceſſary to his patron, and obliges him to purchaſe his ſervices and his zeal; theſe he meaſures by the ſalary he receives, or that which he expects; and as in ſuch ſtates money is the only motive, the chief attention of the maſter is to ſatisfy the avidity of his ſervants, in order to ſecure their attachment. Hence, that prodigality of the Beys, ſo ruinous to Egypt, which they pillage; that want of ſubordination in the Mamlouks, ſo fatal to the chiefs whom they deſpoil; and thoſe intrigues, which never ceaſe to agitate the whole nation. No ſooner is a ſlave enfranchiſed than he aſpires to the principal employments; and, who is to oppoſe his pretenſions? In thoſe who command, he diſcovers no ſuperiority of talents which can impreſs him with reſpect; in them he only ſees ſoldiers like himſelf, arrived at power by *the decrees of fate*; and if it pleaſe fate to favour him, he will attain it alſo, nor will he be leſs able in the art of governing, which conſiſts only in taking money, and giving blows with the ſabre.

From this ſyſtem alſo has ariſen an unbridled luxury, which, indulging the gratifi-

cation

cation of every imaginary want, has opened an unlimited field to the rapacity of the great. This luxury is ſo exceſſive, that there is not a Mamlouk, whoſe maintenance coſts leſs than twenty-five hundred livres (a hundred and four pounds) annually, and many of them coſt double that ſum. At every return of the Ramadan, they muſt have a new ſuit, French and Venetian cloths, and Damaſcus and India ſtuffs. They muſt often likewiſe be provided with new horſes and harneſs. They muſt have piſtols and ſabres from Damaſcus, gilt ſtirrups, and ſaddles and bridles plated with ſilver. The chiefs, to diſtinguiſh them from the vulgar, muſt have trinkets, precious ſtones, Arabian horſes of two or three hundred pounds value, ſhawls of Caſhmire worth from five-and-twenty to fifty pounds each, and a variety of peliſſes, the cheapeſt of which coſts above twenty pounds *(b)*. The women have rejected the ancient cuſtom of wearing ſequins on the head and breaſt, as not ſufficiently ſplendid and coſtly, and in their ſtead

(b) The European merchants, who have adopted this luxury, do not think they have a decent wardrobe, unleſs its value exceeds twelve or fifteen thouſand livres (five or ſix hundred pounds.)

have ſubſtituted diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and the fineſt pearls; and to their fondneſs of ſhawls and furs, have added a paſſion for Lyons ſtuffs and laces. When ſuch luxuries are become the neceſſaries of thoſe whoſe authority is without controul, and who neither reſpect the rights of property, nor the life of their inferiors, it is eaſy to conceive what muſt be the condition of their ſubjects who are obliged to furniſh them with whatever their caprice may require.

SECT. VII.

Manners of the Mamlouks.

The manners of the Mamlouks are ſuch, that though I ſhall ſtrictly adhere to truth, I am almoſt afraid I ſhall be ſuſpected of prejudice and exaggeration. Born for the moſt part in the rites of the Greek church, and circumciſed the moment they are bought, they are conſidered by the Turks themſelves as Renegadoes, void of faith and of religion. Strangers to each other, they are not bound by thoſe natural ties which unite the reſt of mankind.

mankind. Without parents, without children, the paſt has done nothing for them, and they do nothing for the future. Ignorant and ſuperſtitious from education, they become ferocious from the murders they commit, perfidious from frequent cabals, ſeditious from tumults, and baſe, deceitful, and corrupted by every ſpecies of debauchery. They are, above all, addicted to that abominable wickedneſs which was at all times the vice of the Greeks and of the Tartars, and is the firſt leſſon they receive from their maſters. It is difficult to account for this taſte, when we conſider that they all have women, unleſs we ſuppoſe they ſeek in one ſex, that poignancy of refuſal which they do not permit the other. It is however very certain, that there is not a ſingle Mamlouk but is polluted by this depravity; and the contagion has ſpread among the inhabitants of Cairo, and even the Chriſtians of Syria who reſide in that city.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Government of the Mamlouks.

SUCH are the men who at preſent govern and decide the fate of Egypt: a few lucky ſtrokes of the ſabre, a greater portion of cunning, or audacity, have conferred on them this pre-eminence; but it is not to be imagined that in changing fortune theſe upſtarts change their character; they have ſtill the meanneſs of ſlaves, though advanced to the rank of monarchs. Sovereignty with them is not the difficult art of directing to one common object the various paſſions of a numerous ſociety, but only the means of poſſeſſing more women, more toys, horſes, and ſlaves, and ſatisfying all their caprices. The whole adminiſtration, internal and external, is conducted on this principle. It conſiſts in managing the court of Conſtantinople, ſo as to elude the tribute, or the menaces of the Sultan; and in purchaſing a number of ſlaves, multiplying partiſans, countermining plots, and deſtroying their ſecret enemies by the dagger, or by poiſon. Ever tortured by the

the anxiety of ſuſpicion, the chiefs live like the ancient tyrants of Syracuſe. Morad and Ibrahim ſleep continually in the midſt of carbines and ſabres, nor have they any idea of police or a well-regulated government *(i)*. Their only employment is to procure money; and the method conſidered as the moſt ſimple, is to ſeize it wherever it is to be found, to wreſt it by violence from its poſſeſſor, and to impoſe arbitrary contributions every moment on the villages, and on the cuſtom-houſe, which, in its turn, levies them again upon commerce.

SECT. I.

Condition of the People in Egypt.

We may eaſily judge that in ſuch a country, every thing is analogous to ſo wretched

(i) When I was at Cairo, ſome Mamlouks carried off the wife of a Jew, who was paſſing the Nile with her huſband. The Jew having complained to Morad, that Bey replied in his rough tone of voice: *Well, let the young folks amuſe themſelves!* In the evening, the Mamlouks acquainted the Jew that they would reſtore him his wife if he would pay them one hundred piaſters *for their trouble*; and to this he was obliged to ſubmit. This inſtance is the more in point, ſince in this country women are held more ſacred than life itſelf.

a government.

a government. Wherever the cultivator enjoys not the fruit of his labour, he works only by conſtraint, and agriculture languiſhes: Wherever there is no ſecurity in property, there can be no induſtry to procure it, and the arts muſt remain in their infancy. Wherever knowledge has no object, men will do nothing to acquire it, and their minds will continue in a ſtate of barbariſm. Such is the condition of Egypt. The greater part of the lands are in the hands of the Beys, the Mamlouks, and the profeſſors of the law; the number of the other proprietors is extremely ſmall, and their property liable to a thouſand impoſitions. Every moment ſome contribution is to be paid, or ſome damage repaired; there is no right of ſucceſſion or inheritance for real property; every thing returns to government, from which every thing muſt be re-purchaſed. The peaſants are hired labourers, to whom no more is left than barely ſuffices to ſuſtain life. The rice and corn they gather are carried to the table of their maſters, and nothing is reſerved for them but dourra or Indian millet, of which they make a bread without leaven, which is taſteleſs when cold. This bread, baked

baked by a fire kindled with the dried dung of buffaloes and cows *(k)*, is, with water and raw onions, their only food throughout the year; and they eſteem themſelves happy if they can ſometimes procure a little honey, cheeſe, ſour milk, and dates. Fleſh meat, and fat, which they are paſſionately fond of, make their appearance only on the great feſtivals, and among thoſe who are in the beſt circumſtances.

Their whole clothing conſiſts in a ſhirt of coarſe blue linen, and in a clumſy black cloak. Their head-dreſs is a ſort of cloth bonnet, over which they roll a long handkerchief of red woollen. Their arms, legs, and breaſts are naked, and the greateſt part of them do not even wear drawers. Their habitations are mud-walled huts, in which they are ſuffocated with heat and ſmoke, and frequently attacked by maladies ariſing from uncleanneſs, humidity, and unwholeſome food; and, to fill the meaſure of their wretchedneſs, to theſe phyſical evils are added continual alarms, the dread of the robberies of

(k) The reader will recollect that Egypt is a naked country, which affords no fire-wood.

the

the Arabs, and the extortions of the Mamlouks, family feuds, and all the calamities of a perpetual civil war.

This is a juſt picture of all the villages, and equally reſembles the towns. At Cairo itſelf, the ſtranger, on his arrival, is ſtruck with the univerſal appearance of wretchedneſs and miſery. The crowds which throng the ſtreets, preſent to his ſight nothing but filthy rags, and diſguſting nudities. It is true, he often meets with horſemen richly clad; but this diſplay of luxury only renders the contraſt of indigence the more ſhocking. Every thing he ſees or hears, reminds him he is in the country of ſlavery and tyranny. Nothing is talked of but inteſtine diſſenſions, the public miſery, pecuniary extortions, baſtinadoes and murders. There is no ſecurity for life or property. The blood of men is ſhed like that of the vileſt animals. Juſtice herſelf puts to death without formality. The officer of the night in his rounds, and the officer of the day in his circuit, judge, condemn, and execute in the twinkling of an eye, without appeal. Executioners attend them, and, on the firſt ſignal, the head of the unhappy victim falls into the leathern bag, in which

which it is received for fear of ſoiling the place. Were even the appearance of criminality neceſſary to expoſe to the danger of puniſhment, this would be more tolerable; but, frequently, without any other reaſon than the avarice of a powerful chief, or the information of an enemy, a man is ſummoned before ſome Bey, on ſuſpicion of having money. A ſum is demanded from him, and if he denies that he poſſeſſes it, he is thrown on his back, and receives two or three hundred blows on the ſoles of his feet, nay, ſometimes is put to death. Unfortunate is he who is ſuſpected of being in eaſy circumſtances! A hundred ſpies are every moment ready to accuſe him; and it is only by aſſuming the appearance of poverty, that he can hope to eſcape the rapaciouſneſs of power.

SECT. II.

The Miſery and Famine of late Years.

During the laſt three years, the capital of Egypt, and all the country, has preſented a ſpectacle

ſpectacle of the moſt deplorable miſery. To the conſtant evils of an uncontrouled tyranny, and the conſequences of the troubles of the preceding years, were added natural calamities ſtill more deſtructive. The plague, brought from Conſtantinople in the month of November, 1783, made its accuſtomed ravages during the whole winter. Not leſs than fifteen hundred dead bodies were eſtimated to be carried out of the gates of Cairo in a day *(l)*. The ſummer, as is uſual, aſſwaged its fury; but to this ſcourge another equally terrible, ſoon ſucceeded. The inundation of 1783 was not ſufficient, great part of the lands therefore could not be ſown for want of being watered, and another part was in the ſame predicament for want of ſeed. In 1784, the Nile again did not riſe to the favourable height, and the dearth immediately became exceſſive. Soon after the end of November, the famine carried off, at Cairo, nearly as

(l) In Turkey, the tombs, according to the cuſtom of the ancients, are always without the towns; and as each tomb has uſually a large ſtone, and ſome maſonry, they conſtitute what may almoſt be called a ſecond town, which may be named, as formerly at Alexandria, *Necropolis*, or the city of the dead.

many as the plague; the ſtreets, which before were full of beggars, now afforded not a ſingle one: all had periſhed, or deſerted the city. Nor were its ravages leſs dreadful in the villages; an infinite number of wretches, who attempted to eſcape death, were ſcattered over the adjacent countries. I ſaw Syria full of them. In January 1785, the ſtreets of Saide and Acre, and every town in Paleſtine, were crowded with Egyptians, eaſily diſtinguiſhable by their tawny ſkin; and ſome of them had wandered even as far as Aleppo and the Diarbekar. The depopulation of theſe two years cannot be preciſely eſtimated, as the Turks keep no regiſters of births, deaths, or the number of the people *(m)*; but it was the received opinion, that the country had loſt one-ſixth part of its inhabitants.

In theſe circumſtances were renewed all thoſe dreadful ſcenes at the bare relation of which human nature ſhudders, and the ſight of which impreſſes a melancholy horror never to be effaced. For, as was the caſe, during the famine, ſome years ago in Bengal, the

(m) They have ſuperſtitious prejudices againſt this practice.

ſtreets and public places ſwarmed with meagre and dying ſkeletons; whoſe faultering voices implored, in vain, the pity of paſſengers, the common danger having hardened every heart. Theſe wretches expired before the doors of the Beys, who, they knew had large hoards of rice and corn; and, not unfrequently, the Mamlouks, importuned by their cries, chaſed them away with blows. Every diſguſting means of appeaſing the rage of hunger was tried, every thing the moſt filthy devoured; nor, ſhall I ever forget that, when I was returning from Syria to France, in March 1785, I ſaw, under the walls of ancient Alexandria, two wretches ſitting on the dead carcaſe of a camel, and diſputing its putrid fragments with the dogs.

We have among us, minds of noble and exalted ſentiments, who, though they pay the tribute of compaſſion due to ſuch diſmal calamities, find their indignation rouſed, and impute it as a crime to the men who will ſubmit to ſuffer them. They deem thoſe well-deſerving death, who have not the courage to defend themſelves from it, or at leaſt, to ſeek the conſolation of exemplary vengeance. They even go ſo far as to adduce theſe facts

in

in proof of a moral paradox, perhaps raſhly advanced, and endeavour to demonſtrate from them the pretended axiom—" that the inha-" bitants of hot countries, debaſed by climate " and temperament, are deſtined, by nature, " to be the ſlaves of deſpotiſm."

But have they maturely examined whether the ſame abject ſubmiſſion is never obſervable in climates they are pleaſed to honour with the excluſive privilege of liberty? Have they carefully conſidered whether the general facts on which they build be not accompanied with circumſtances and acceſſaries which make an eſſential difference in the conſequences? In politics, as in medicine, detached phænomena continually lead us into error reſpecting the real cauſes of the malady. Men are too anxious to erect particular caſes into general rules; and yet thoſe univerſal principles, which are ſo flattering to the mind, have almoſt invariably the defect of being vague. So rarely are the facts on which we reaſon exact, and ſo liable to miſtake is the moſt careful obſerver, that we ought to be extremely cautious, or we ſhall be continually raiſing ſyſtems on imaginary foundations.

In the caſe of which we are treating, if we attentively examine the cauſes of the debaſement of the Egyptians, we ſhall find that this people, depreſſed by cruel circumſtances, are more deſerving of pity than contempt, for the political ſituation of this country is very unlike that of Europe. Among us, the traces of ancient revolutions are becoming fainter every day; the foreign conquerors have aſſimilated with the conquered natives; and from this mixture has been formed one national body, all the members of which have the ſame intereſt. In Egypt, on the contrary, and throughout almoſt all Aſia, the original inhabitants, enſlaved by revolutions, the effects of which are ſtill apparent, are become a prey to foreign conquerors, who, mixing with the natives, have formed diſtinct parties, whoſe intereſts are directly oppoſite. The ſtate is properly divided into two factions; one, that of the conquering nation, who are in poſſeſſion of all the civil and military employments; and the other, that of the vanquiſhed, who conſtitute the ſubaltern claſſes of ſociety. The ruling party aſſuming, by right of conqueſt, an excluſive

cluſive title to all property, treat the governed faction as merely the paſſive inſtrument of their pleaſures, while the latter, in their turn, deſtitute of all perſonal intereſt, contribute as little as poſſible to the ſervice of the other. Their ſtate is that of a ſlave, to whom the opulence of his maſter is a burthen, and who would willingly free himſelf from his ſervitude, were it in his power.

This feebleneſs is another characteriſtic which diſtinguiſhes the conſtitution of theſe nations from thoſe of Europe. In the European ſtates, the governments, deriving from each reſpective nation the means of governing it, find it neither an eaſy matter, nor their intereſt to abuſe their power. And even ſuppoſing they formed diſtinct intereſts, they would ſtill be unable to obtain unlimited powers. The reaſon is, that beſides the multitude called *people*, which, though powerful from its number, is always feeble from its diſunion, there exiſts a middle order, which, partaking of the qualities of the governors and the governed, maintains, in ſome meaſure, an equilibrium between the one and the other. This is the claſs of the opulent and independent citizens, who, diſ-

perſed through the different occupations of ſociety, have a common intereſt in ſeeing thoſe rights of property and ſecurity which they enjoy reſpected. In Egypt, on the contrary, there is no middle ſtate; none of our numerous claſſes of nobility; no clergy, merchants, or landholders, which, in ſome degree, conſtitute an intermediate body between the common people and the government. There, every man is a ſoldier, or profeſſor of the law, that is to ſay, a creature of government; or he is a labourer, an artizan, or ſhopkeeper, that is to ſay, one of the people, and the people above all are deficient in the firſt requiſite to combat oppreſſion, the art of combining and directing their force. To deſtroy or to reform the Mamlouks, a general league of the peaſantry is neceſſary; and this it is impoſſible to form. The ſyſtem of oppreſſion is methodical. One would imagine theſe tyrants were every where endued with an intuitive knowledge of its principles. Each province, each diſtrict, has its governor, and each village its lieutenant *(n)*, who

(*n*) In Arabic *kaiem makam*, literally *locum tenens*, from which is formed *caimacan*, lieutenant.

watches

watches the motions of the multitude. Single againſt ſuch numbers, he may appear feeble; but the power he repreſents renders him formidable. Beſides, experience proves that wherever a man has the courage to make himſelf maſter he finds enough whoſe meanneſs will ſecond his pretenſions. This lieutenant transfers a portion of his authority to ſome individuals of the ſociety he oppreſſes, and theſe become his ſupporters: jealous of each other, they ſtrive who ſhall beſt merit his favour, and he employs them alternately to effect their mutual deſtruction.

The ſame jealouſies and inveterate hatreds pervade alſo and diſunite the villages. But even ſuppoſing an union which is ſo difficult to take place, what could a crowd of bare-footed and almoſt naked peaſants, with only ſticks, or even with muſkets, effect againſt a body of diſciplined and well-armed cavalry? I am, above all, led to believe Egypt can never ſhake off this yoke, when I conſider the nature of the country, which is but too advantageous for cavalry. If the beſt regulated infantry among us dread to en-

counter the horſe in a plain, how formidable muſt they be to a people who are wholly ignorant of the very firſt elements of tactics, and who can never poſſibly acquire a knowledge which can only be the reſult of an experience their ſituation denies them. Mountainous countries, alone, afford to liberty its great reſources. It is there that ſkill and addreſs, favoured by ſituation, ſupply the deficiency of numbers. The revolters, unanimous, becauſe they are at firſt not numerous, acquire every day new ſtrength, from the habit of exerciſing it, while the oppreſſor, leſs active, becauſe he is already powerful, delays his attack, till at length theſe bands of peaſants, or plunderers, whom he deſpiſed, become ſoldiers inured to war, and diſpute with him, even in the plains, the ſuperiority in military ſkill, and the palm of victory. In flat countries, on the contrary, the firſt tumult is ſuppreſſed, and the ignorant peaſant, who does not even know how to throw up an entrenchment, has no other reſource but in the clemency of his maſter, and a quiet ſubmiſſion to his ſlavery. We ſhall therefore find, that no general prin-

ciple

ciple can be advanced more true than the following: *That plains are the habitation of indolence and of ſlavery, and mountains the country of energy and freedom (o).*

In the preſent ſituation of the Egyptians, it is poſſible they might not diſplay much courage; and yet it may not be true that the ſeeds of it are wanting in them, or that it is denied them by the climate. For that continued effort of the mind, called courage, is a quality more nearly allied to our moral, than our phyſical conſtitution. It is not the greater or leſs degree of heat in the climate, but rather the ardour of the paſſions, and

(o) In fact, the ancient and modern nations in general, who have diſplayed the greateſt activity, were mountaineers. The Aſſyrians, who extended their conqueſts from the Indus to the Mediterranean, came from the mountains of Atouria. The Chaldeans were originally from the ſame countries; the Perſians who conquered under Cyrus, deſcended from the mountains of the Elymais, and the Macedonians from Mount Rhodope. In modern times, the Swiſs, the Scots, the Savoyards, the Miquelets, the Aſturians, the inhabitants of the Cevennes, always free, or difficult to ſubject, would ſeem to prove this a general rule, did not the exception of the Arabs and the Tartars indicate ſome other moral cauſe, common to the plains as well as to the mountains.

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the confidence we have in our own powers, which enables us to brave danger. Where theſe two requiſites do not exiſt, courage may remain inert; though circumſtances alone are wanting to call it into action. Beſides, if any men are capable of this ardour, it ſhould be thoſe whoſe minds and bodies, inured to ſuffering by habit, have acquired a hardineſs which blunts the edge of pain, and ſuch are the Egyptians. We deceive ourſelves when we repreſent them as enervated by heat, or effeminate from debauchery. The inhabitants of the cities, and men of opulence, may indeed be a prey to that effeminacy which is common to them in every climate; but the poor deſpiſed peaſants, denominated *fellahs*, ſupport aſtoniſhing fatigues. I have ſeen them paſs whole days in drawing water from the Nile, expoſed naked to a ſun which would kill us. Thoſe who are valets to the Mamlouks, continually follow their maſters. In town, or in the country, and amid all the dangers of war, hey accompany them every where, and always on foot; they will run before or after their horſes for days together, and when they are

are fatigued, tie themſelves to their tails rather than be left behind.

The character of their minds is every way correſpondent to the hardineſs of their bodies. The implacability diſplayed by theſe peaſants in their hatreds, and their revenges *(p)*; their obſtinacy in the battles which frequently happen between different villages; their ſenſe of honour in ſuffering the baſtinado, without diſcovering a ſecret, *(q)* and even the barbarity with which they puniſh the ſlighteſt deviation from chaſtity in their wives and daughters *(r)*, all prove that their minds, when ſwayed by certain

(p) When a man is ſlain by another, the family of the deceaſed demand a retaliation from the family of the aſſaſſin, and this vengeance is purſued from generation to generation, without ever being forgotten.

(q) When a perſon has undergone the torture, without diſcovering his wealth, he is ſaid to be *a man*, and this eulogium indemnifies him for his ſuffering.

(r) They frequently put them to death on mere ſuſpicion; and this is equally true in Syria. When I was at Ramla, a peaſant came into the market for ſeveral days, with his cloak ſtained with the blood of his daughter, whom he had thus killed: the action indeed was generally approved. Turkiſh juſtice never meddles with theſe affairs.

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prejudices, are capable of great energy, and that that energy only wants a proper direction, to become a formidable courage. The cruelties and ſeditions which have ſometimes been the conſequence of their exhauſted patience, eſpecially in the province of Sharkia, indicate a latent fire, which waits only for proper agents to put it in motion, and produce great and unexpected effects.

SECT. III.

State of the Arts.

But a powerful obſtacle to every fortunate revolution in Egypt, is the profound ignorance of the nation, which equally prevents them from perceiving the cauſes of their evils, or applying the neceſſary remedies.

As I propoſe treating this article, which, like ſeveral of the preceding ones, is common to all the Turkiſh empire, more fully in another place, I ſhall not at preſent dwell on particulars. It will be ſufficient to obſerve, that this ignorance, diffuſed through every claſs, extends its effects to every ſpecies of moral

moral and phyſical knowledge, to the ſciences, and the fine arts, and even to the mechanical profeſſions. The moſt ſimple of theſe are ſtill in a ſtate of infancy. The work of their cabinet-makers, lockſmiths, and gunſmiths, is extremely clumſy. Their mercery, their hardware, their gun and piſtol barrels, are all imported from foreign countries. With difficulty can you find one watchmaker at Cairo who knows how to repair a watch, and he too is an European. Jewellers are more common there than at Smyrna and Aleppo; but they know not how to mount properly the ſimpleſt roſe. Gunpowder is made there, but it is coarſe. Sugar is refined there, but it is full of melaſſes, and the white is exceſſively dear. The only manufacture in any degree of perfection is their ſilk ſtuffs; and the workmanſhip of them is much leſs highly finiſhed, and the price far greater than in Europe.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

State of Commerce.

IN this ſtate of univerſal barbariſm, it cannot but appear aſtoniſhing that commerce ſhould ſtill continue ſo flouriſhing as we find it at Cairo; but an attentive enquiry into the ſources from whence it is derived will explain the reaſon.

Two powerful cauſes have contributed to render Cairo the ſeat of an extenſive commerce; the firſt of which is, that all the commodities conſumed in Egypt are collected within the walls of that city; and all the perſons of property, that is, the Mamlouks and lawyers, are aſſembled there, and draw thither their whole revenues, without making any return to the country from which they receive them.

The ſecond is the ſituation, which makes this city a centre of circulation, while by the Red Sea, it correſponds with Arabia and India; by the Nile, with Abyſſinia and the interior parts of Africa; and by the Mediterranean, with Europe and the empire of Turkey.

Turkey. Every year a caravan from Abyſſinia arrives at Cairo, and brings from a thouſand to twelve hundred black ſlaves, as alſo elephants teeth, gold duſt, oſtrich-feathers, gums, parrots, and monkeys *(s)*, while another, deſtined for Mecca, leaves the extremities of Morocco, and receiving pilgrims even from the river of Senegal *(t)*, coaſts along the Mediterranean, collecting thoſe of Algiers, Tripoli, and Tunis, and arrives by the deſert at Alexandria, conſiſting of not leſs than three or four thouſand camels. From thence it proceeds to Cairo, where it joins the caravan of Egypt. They then jointly ſet out for Mecca, whence they return one hundred days after. But the pilgrims of Morocco, who have ſix hundred leagues more to travel, do not reach home

(s) This caravan comes by land along the Nile; it was with that Mr. *Bruce* returned in 1772, from Abyſſinia, after having performed the moſt adventurous journey attempted in the preſent age. In traverſing the deſert, the proviſions of the caravan fell ſhort, and the travellers lived ſeveral days on *gum* alone.

(t) I ſaw ſeveral negroes who came by this caravan, from the country of the *Foulis*, to the north of Senegal, and who ſaid they had ſeen Europeans in their country.

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till after an abſence of more than a year. The lading of theſe caravans conſiſts in India ſtuffs, ſhawls, gums, pearls, perfumes, and eſpecially the coffee of Yemen.

The ſame commodities arrive by another route at Suez, to which port the ſoutherly winds bring, in May, ſix or eight and twenty ſail of veſſels from Djedda. Cairo does not retain the whole quantity of this merchandize; but, beſides what is there conſumed, conſiderable profits ariſe from the duties, and the ſums expended by the pilgrims. On the other hand, ſmall caravans arrive from time to time from Damaſcus, with ſilk and cotton ſtuffs, oils, and dried fruits. During the favourable ſeaſon, there are always ſome veſſels in the road of Damietta, unloading hogſheads of tobacco from Latakia, the conſumption of which in Egypt is enormous. Theſe veſſels take rice in exchange, whilſt others arrive ſucceſſively at Alexandria, bringing clothing, arms, furs, paſſengers, and wrought ſilk, from Conſtantinople. Veſſels come likewiſe from Marſeilles, Leghorn, and Venice, with cloths, cochineal, Lyons ſtuffs, and laces, grocery, paper, iron, lead, Venetian ſequins, and German dollars. All theſe articles

articles conveyed by ſea to Roſetta in barks called *djerm (u)*, are firſt landed there, then re-imbarked on the Nile, and ſent to Cairo. From this account, it is not ſurprizing that commerce ſhould continue ſo flouriſhing in that capital, and we need not heſitate to admit the report of the commiſſioner general of the cuſtoms, who aſſerted, that in 1783, Cairo had traded to the amount of near a hundred and fifty millions of livres, (ſix million two hundred and fifty thouſand pounds.) But if we examine the channels into which this wealth is poured, if we conſider that a great part of the merchandize and coffee of India paſſes into foreign countries, the value of which is paid in goods from Europe and Turkey; that the conſumption of the country almoſt entirely conſiſts of articles of luxury completely finiſhed, and that the produce given in return is principally in raw materials, we ſhall perceive that all this commerce is carried on without contributing greatly to the real riches of Egypt, or the benefit of the people.

(u) A ſort of boat which carries an extremely large lateen ſail, ſtriped with blue and brown, like ticking.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the Iſthmus of Suez, and the Poſſibility of effecting a Junction of the Red Sea with the Mediterranean.

I HAVE mentioned the commerce carried on at Cairo, with Arabia and India, by the way of Suez; and this ſubject naturally leads to a queſtion frequently agitated in Europe; which is, whether it would be practicable to cut through the Iſthmus which ſeparates the Red Sea from the Mediterranean, that veſſels might arrive at India by a ſhorter route than by the Cape of Good Hope. The narrowneſs of the Iſthmus induces us to believe it might eaſily be effected; but, in a journey I made to Suez, the following reaſons induced me to change my opinion.

Firſt, It is certainly true, that the ſpace which ſeparates the two ſeas is not more than eighteen or nineteen ordinary leagues; it is true, alſo, that this interval is not interſected by mountains, and that, from the tops of the terraces at Suez, we cannot diſcover, with

with any teleſcopes, a ſingle obſtacle on the naked and barren plain to the north-weſt; it is not therefore the difference of levels which prevents the junction *(x)*; but, the great difficulty ariſes from the nature of the correſponding coaſts of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, which are of a low and ſandy ſoil, where the waters form lakes, ſhoals, and moraſſes, ſo that veſſels cannot approach within a conſiderable diſtance. It will therefore be found ſcarcely poſſible to dig a permanent canal amid theſe ſhifting ſands; not to mention that the ſhore is deſtitute of harbours, which muſt be entirely the work of art. The country beſides has not a drop of freſh water, and to ſupply the inhabitants, it muſt be brought as far as from the Nile.

The beſt and only method therefore of effecting this junction, is that which has been

(x) The ancients were of opinion that the Red Sea was higher than the Mediterranean; and, in fact, if we obſerve that, from the canal of Kolzoum to the ſea, the Nile has a declivity, for the ſpace of thirty leagues, this idea will not appear ſo ridiculous; beſides that, to me, it appears probable the level will be found at the Cape of Good Hope.

already ſucceſsfully practiſed at different times; which is, by making the river itſelf the medium of communication, for which the ground is perfectly well calculated; for Mount Mokattam ſuddenly terminating in the latitude of Cairo, forms only a low and ſemicircular mound, round which is a continued plain from the banks of the Nile, as far as the point of the Red Sea. The ancients, who early underſtood the advantage to be derived from this ſituation, adopted the idea of joining the two ſeas by a canal connected with the river. Strabo (lib. 17.) obſerves, that this firſt was executed under Seſoſtris, who reigned about the time of the Trojan war *(y)*; and this work was ſo conſiderable as to occaſion it to be remarked; "that it was a hundred cubits (or a hundred "and ſeventy feet) wide, and deep enough "for large veſſels." After the Greeks conquered the country, it was reſtored by the Ptolemies, and again renewed by Trajan. In ſhort, even the Arabs themſelves followed

(y) That is, according to certain calculations of mine, in the time of Solomon. See *Mémoire ſur la Chronologie Ancienne*, inſerted in the *Journal des Sçavans*, of January 1782.

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theſe examples. " In the time of Omar ebn-el-Kattab," ſays the hiſtorian El Makin, " the " cities of Mecca and Medina ſuffering from " famine, the Caliph ordered Amrou, Go- " vernor of Egypt, to cut a canal from the Nile " to Kolzoum, that the contributions of corn " and barley, appointed for Arabia, might be " conveyed that way."

This canal is the ſame which runs at preſent to Cairo, and loſes itſelf in the country to the north-eaſt of *Berket-el-Hadj*, or the Lake of the Pilgrims. Kolzoum, the Clyſma of the Greeks, where it terminated, has been deſtroyed for many ages; but the name and ſituation ſtill ſubſiſt in a hillock of ſand, bricks, and ſtones, three hundred paces to the north of Suez, on the border of the ſea, oppoſite the ford which leads to the ſpring of El-Naba. I have been on the ſpot as well as M. Niebuhr, and the Arabs told me, as they did him, it was called *Kolzoum*; Danville therefore is deceived, when, copying an error of Ptolemy's, he places Clyſma eight leagues more to the ſouthward. I am of opinion that he is likewiſe miſtaken, in ſuppoſing Suez the Arſinoe of the ancients.

This city having been ſituated, according to the Greeks and Arabs, to the north of Clyſma, we ſhould endeavour to trace it according to the words of Strabo *(c)*, " quite at " the bottom of the gulph, as we approach " Egypt," without proceeding however with M. Savary as far as Adjeroud, which is too far to the weſtward. We ought to confine ourſelves to the low country, which extends about two leagues from the bottom of the preſent gulph, that ſpace being all we can reaſonably allow for the retreat of the ſea in ſeventeen centuries.

Formerly theſe diſtricts were covered with towns which have diſappeared with the waters of the Nile; the canals which conveyed theſe are deſtroyed, for in this ſhifting ſoil they are preſently filled up, both by the ſands driven by the winds, and by the cavalry of the Bedouin Arabs. At preſent the commerce of Cairo with Suez is only carried on by means of caravans, which wait the arrival, and ſet out on the departure of the veſſels, that is, towards the end of April,

(c) Strabo, lib. 17.

or

or the beginning of May, and in the courſe of the months of July and Auguſt. That which I accompanied in 1783, conſiſted of about three thouſand camels, and five or ſix thouſand men *(z)*. The merchandize conſiſted in wood, ſails, and cordage for the ſhips at Suez; in ſome anchors, carried each of them by four camels, iron bars, carded wool, and lead; it likewiſe carried bales of cloth, and barrels of cochineal, corn, barley, and beans, Turkiſh piaſtres, Venetian ſequins, and Imperial dollars. All theſe commodities were deſtined for Djedda, Mecca, and Moka, where they were to be bartered for Indian goods, and the coffee of Arabia, which forms the principal article of the returns. There was beſides a great number of pilgrims, who preferred the voyage by ſea to a land journey; and it alſo carried

(z) It remained upwards of forty days aſſembled, deferring its departure for various reaſons; among others, on account of the *unlucky* days, in which reſpect the Turks are as ſuperſtitious as the Romans formerly were. At length it ſet out on the 27th of July, and arrived the 29th at Suez, having journeyed twenty-nine hours by the route of the Haouatat Arabs, a league farther to the ſouth than the Lake of the Pilgrims.

the neceſſary proviſions, ſuch as rice, meat, wood, and even water; for no place in the world is more deſtitute of every neceſſary than Suez. From the tops of the terraces, the eye, ſurveying the ſandy plain to the north-weſt, the white rocks of Arabia to the eaſt, or the ſea, and the Mountain Mokattam, to the ſouth, cannot diſcern even a ſingle tree, or the ſmalleſt ſpot of verdure. Suez preſents no proſpect but extenſive yellow ſands, or a lake of green water; the ruinous condition of the houſes heightens this melancholy ſcenery. The only water which can be drunk is brought from *El-Naba*, or the *ſpring*, ſituated at the diſtance of three hours journey on the Arabian ſhore; but it is ſo brackiſh that without a mixture of rum, it is inſupportable to Europeans. The ſea might furniſh a quantity of ſhell and other fiſh; but the Arabs ſeldom attempt fiſhing, at which they are far from expert; when the veſſels are gone, therefore, nobody remains at Suez, but the governor, who is a Mamlouk, and twelve or fourteen perſons, who form his houſehold, and the garriſon.

The fortreſs is a defenceleſs heap of ruins, which

which the Arabs conſider as a citadel, becauſe it contains ſix braſs four pounders, and two Greek gunners, who turn their heads aſide when they fire. The harbour is a wretched quay, where the ſmalleſt boats are unable to reach the ſhore, except at the higheſt tides. There, however, the merchandize is embarked, to convey it over the banks of ſand, to the veſſels which anchor in the road. This road, ſituated a league from the town, is ſeparated from it by a ſhore which is left dry at low water; it has no works for its defence, ſo that the veſſels which I have ſeen there, to the number of eight-and-twenty at a time, might be attacked without oppoſition; for the ſhips themſelves are incapable of reſiſtance, none having any other artillery than four ruſty ſwivels. Their number diminiſhes every year, ſince, by continually coaſting along a ſhore full of ſhoals, one out of nine, at leaſt, is ſhipwrecked. In 1783, one of them, having anchored at *El-Tor*, to take in water, was ſurpriſed by the Arabs, while the crew were ſleeping on ſhore. After plundering it of fifteen hundred bags of coffee, they abandoned the veſſel to the wind, which threw

it

it upon the coaſt. The dock at Suez is ill adapted to repair ſuch damages; ſcarcely do they build a *cayaſſe* in three years. Beſides that the ſea, which, from its flux and reflux, accumulates the ſand upon that coaſt, will at laſt choak up the entrance, and the ſame change will take place at Suez, which has already at Kolzoum and Arſinoe.

Were Egypt under the adminiſtration of a wiſe government, advantage might be then taken of that accident to build another town in the ſame road, which might be done on a cauſeway of only ſeven or eight feet in height, as the tide uſually riſes no more than three feet and a half; the canal of the Nile would be cleanſed and repaired, and the five hundred thouſand livres (near twenty-one thouſand pounds), paid annually to the eſcort of the Arabs of Haouatat and Ayaidi entirely ſaved: in ſhort, to avoid the very dangerous bar of the Bogaz of Roſetta, the canal of Alexandria would be rendered navigable, from whence the merchandize might be conveyed immediately to the Porte. But ſuch are not the cares of the preſent government. The ſmall degree of encouragement it grants to commerce is not even founded on rational motives;

motives; if it be tolerated, it is merely because it furniſhes a means of gratifying rapacity, and is a ſource from whence tyranny perpetually derives profit, without conſidering how ſoon it may be exhauſted. The Turks do not even know how to make advantage of the eagerneſs of the Europeans to communicate with India. In vain have the Engliſh and French attempted to concert with them a plan for opening ſuch a paſſage; they either inflexibly refuſe, or diſcourage every application. We ſhould be wrong in flattering ourſelves with any durable ſucceſs; for even were treaties concluded, the revolutions which, between evening and morning, ſo often alter the face of affairs at Cairo, would render them of no effect, as was the caſe with the treaty concluded in 1775, between Mohammad Bey and the Governor of Bengal. Such beſides is the avarice and treachery of the Mamlouks, that they would never want pretexts to haraſs the merchants, and would augment, in ſpite of every engagement, the duties on commodities.

Thoſe on coffee are at this moment enormous. The *farde*, or bale of this commodity, weighing

weighing from three hundred and ſeventy to three hundred and ſeventy-five pounds, and coſting at Moka, forty-five pattaques *(a)*, or two hundred and thirty-ſix livres Tournois, (nine pounds ſixteen and eight-pence), pays in *bahr*, or ſea duties, one hundred and forty-ſeven livres (ſix pounds two ſhillings and ſix-pence), beſides an addition of ſixty-nine livres (two pounds ſeventeen ſhillings and ſix-pence) laid on in 1783 *(b)*. So that on adding the ſix per cent. collected at Djedda, we

(a) This is the name given by the merchants of Provence to the dollar of the empire, after the Arabs, who call it *Rial aboutaka*, or *Father of the window*, on account of the arms on the reverſe, which, according to them, reſemble a window. The dollar is worth five livres, five ſols (four and four-pence halfpenny.)

(b) In May 1783, the fleet of Djedda, conſiſting of twenty-eight ſail, four of which were veſſels pierced for ſixty guns, brought near thirty thouſand fardes of coffee, which, at the rate of 370 pounds the farde, amount to eleven millions one hundred thouſand pounds weight, or one hundred and one thouſand quintals; but it muſt be obſerved, that the demand of that year was more than a third greater than uſual. Accordingly, we muſt only reckon, on an average, from ſixty to ſeventy thouſand quintals annually. The farde, paying two hundred

we ſhall find that the duties nearly equal the prime coſt *(c)*.

hundred and ſixteen livres (nine pounds), duty at Suez, the thirty thouſand fardes of 1783 produced to the cuſtom-houſe ſix millions four hundred and eighty thouſand livres Tournois (two hundred and ſeventy thouſand pounds.)

(c)

At Moka - - -	16 livres.
At Suez - - -	147
Extra-duty - -	69
Total of duties -	232
Prime coſt - -	236
Total - -	468

adding to which the freight, loſſes, and waſte, it is not aſtoniſhing that the Moka coffee ſhould ſell at five-and forty, and fifty ſols (one and ten-pence, and two and a a penny), the pound in Egypt, and for three livres, (half a crown) at Marſeilles.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Of the Cuſtom-houſes and Impoſts.

THE adminiſtration of the cuſtoms forms, in Egypt, as in all Turkey, one of the principal offices of government. He who exerciſes it is at once the comptroller and farmer-general. All the duties on entry, exports, and the circulation of commodities, depend on him. He names all the ſubalterns who collect them. To this he adds the *paltes*, or excluſive privileges of the natron of Terane, the kali of Alexandria, the caſſia of the Thebais, the ſenna of Nubia, and, in a word, is the deſpot of commerce, which he regulates at his pleaſure. His office is never held for longer than a year. The price of his contract in 1783, was one thouſand purſes, which, at the rate of five hundred piaſters the purſe, and fifty ſols the piaſter, make twelve hundred and fifty thouſand livres, (above fifty-two thouſand pounds.) It is true we muſt include among the conditions of his farm eventual extortions, or caſual demands;

demands; that is, when Mourad Bey, or Ibrahim, are in want of five hundred thouſand livres, they ſend for the commiſſioner of the cuſtoms, who cannot diſpenſe with advancing them that ſum; but he receives a warrant in return, which empowers him to levy this extortion on commerce, for which he taxes, in a friendly way, the different corps or nations, ſuch as the Franks, the Barbary Arabs, and the Turks; and this frequently turns out not a little to his advantage. In ſome provinces of Turkey, he has alſo the collecting of the *miri*, or tax levied only on the lands. But in Egypt, this adminiſtration is entruſted with the Copt writers, who exerciſe it under the direction of the ſecretary of the ruling Bey. Theſe writers have regiſters of each village, and are employed in receiving the payments, and accounting for them to the treaſury; they frequently profit by the ignorance of the peaſants, in not carrying to account the partial payments, and by obliging them to diſcharge the debt a ſecond time: they often ſell the oxen, the buffaloes, and even the mat on which theſe wretches lie; and it may be truly ſaid, that they are agents every way

worthy of their maſters. The ordinary tax ſhould amount to thirty-three piaſters for each *feddan*; that is, to near eighty-three livres (three pounds nine and two-pence) for every yoke of oxen; but this is ſometimes carried, by abuſe, as far as two hundred livres, (four pounds ſix and ſixpence.) It is calculated that the whole produce of the miri, collected as well in money as in corn, barley, beans, rice, &c. may amount to from forty-ſix to fifty millions of French money (about two millions ſterling) when bread ſells at one *fadda* the *rotle*, that is, at five liards (ſomething more than a half-penny) the pound of fourteen ounces.

But to return to the cuſtom-houſes; they were managed formerly, according to ancient cuſtom, by the Jews; but Ali Bey having completely ruined them in 1769, by an enormous extortion, they paſſed into the hands of the Chriſtians of Syria, with whom they ſtill remain. Theſe Chriſtians, who came from Damaſcus to Cairo, about fifty years ago, conſiſted at firſt of but about two or three families; their profits attracted others, and their number is now multiplied to near five hundred. Their original modeſty and œconomy

nomy enabled them to gain poſſeſſion, firſt of one branch of commerce, and then of another, ſo that at length they were able to take the farm of the cuſtom-houſe after the ruin of the Jews. From that time they have acquired great opulence, and taken advantages which may poſſibly end by a fate ſimilar to that of their predeceſſors. Their hour was thought to be come when their chief, Anthony Faraoun, fled from Egypt, in 1784, and went to Leghorn, to enjoy in ſafety a fortune of ſeveral millions; but this event, as it was without example *(d)*, ſo it had no conſequences.

SECT. I.

Of the Commerce of the Franks at Cairo.

Next to theſe Chriſtians of Syria, the moſt conſiderable body of merchants is that of the Europeans, known in the Levant under the name of *Franks*. From a very early period

(d) In general the orientals hold the manners of Europe in deteſtation, which prevents every idea of emigration.

the Venetians have had eſtabliſhments at Cairo, to which they ſend ſadlery, ſilk ſtuffs, looking glaſſes, mercery, &c. The Engliſh alſo partook of this trade, and ſent cloths, arms, and hardware, which have to this day preſerved their ſuperiority of reputation. But the French, by furniſhing ſimilar articles at a much cheaper rate, have obtained the preference, to the excluſion of their rivals. The pillage of the caravan which attempted to paſs from Suez to Cairo, in 1779 *(e)*, has given

(e) The newſpapers of the day ſpoke much of this pillage, on account of M. de St. Germain, of the iſle of Bourbon, whoſe misfortunes were greatly talked of in France. The caravan was compoſed of Engliſh officers and paſſengers, who had landed from two veſſels at Suez, in their way to Europe, by Cairo. The Bedouin Arabs of Tor, informed that theſe paſſengers were richly laden, reſolved to plunder them, and attacked them five leagues from Suez. The Europeans, ſtripped ſtark naked, and diſperſed by fear, ſeparated into two parties. Some of them returned to Suez; the remainder, to the number of ſeven, thinking they could reach Cairo, puſhed forward into the Deſert. Fatigue, thirſt, hunger, and the heat of the ſun, deſtroyed them one after the other. M. de Saint Germain alone ſurvived all theſe horrors. During three days and two nights, he wandered in this parched and ſandy deſert, frozen at night by the north wind, (it was in

given the laſt blow to the Engliſh; and ſince that period there has not appeared in either of

in the month of January) and burnt by the ſun during the day, without any other ſhade but a ſingle buſh, into which he thruſt his head among the thorns, or any drink but his own urine. At length, on the third day, perceiving the water of *Berket-el-Hadj*, he ſtrove to make towards it; but he had already fallen three times from weakneſs, and undoubtedly would have remained where he laſt fell, but for a peaſant, mounted on a camel, who ſaw him at a great diſtance. This charitable man conveyed him to his dwelling, and took care of him for three days with the utmoſt humanity. At the expiration of that time, the merchants of Cairo, apprized of his misfortune, procured him a conveyance to that city, where he arrived in the moſt deplorable condition. His body was one entire wound, his breath cadaverous, and he had ſcarcely a ſpark of life remaining. By dint of great care and attention, however, Mr. Charles Magallon, who received him in his houſe, had the ſatisfaction of ſaving him, and even of re-eſtabliſhing his health. Much was ſaid at the time of the barbarity of the Arabs, who notwithſtanding killed no one: at preſent we may venture to blame the imprudence of the Europeans, who conducted themſelves throughout the whole affair like madmen. So great was the diſcord among them, and they had carried their negligence ſo far, as not to have a ſingle piſtol fit for uſe. All their arms were at the bottom of their cheſts. Beſides, it appears that the Arabs did not act merely from their uſual motives; well in-

of theſe towns, a ſingle factor of that nation.

The principal article of the French trade in Egypt conſiſts, as throughout the Levant, in light cloths of Languedoc, called firſt *Londrins*, and ſecond *Londrins*. They ſell annually, upon an average, between nine hundred and a thouſand bales. The profit is from thirty-five to forty per cent, but their drawing and re-drawing cauſing a loſs of from twenty to twenty-five, the net produce is only fifteen per cent. The other articles of importation are iron, lead, groceries, cochineal, ſome laces, and Lyons ſtuffs, various articles of mercery, and dollars and ſequins.

In exchange they take coffee of Arabia, African gums, coarſe cottons, manufactured at Manouf, and which are re-ſhipped to the French Weſt-Indies, untanned hides,

formed perſons aſſert that the plan was concerted at Conſtantinople, by *the Engliſh Eaſt-India Company's agents*, who ſaw, with a jealous eye, individuals entering into competition with them for the traffic of Bengal; and what has tranſpired in the courſe of the enquiries into this affair, has proved the truth of the aſſertion.

ſafranum,

ſafranum, ſal ammoniac, and rice *(f)*. Theſe articles rarely balance the exports, and the merchant is at a loſs for his returns, not however from a want of a variety of productions, as Egypt furniſhes corn, rice, doura, millet, ſeſamum, cotton, flax, ſenna, caſſia, ſugar-canes, nitre, natrum, ſal ammoniac, honey, and wax; ſilks alſo and wine might be produced: but induſtry and exertion are wanting, becauſe the cultivator would not be permitted to enjoy the fruits of his labour.

The importation of the French is eſtimated, *communibus annis*, at three millions of livres (a hundred and twenty-five thouſand pounds). France maintained a Conſul at Cairo till 1777, when he was withdrawn on account of the expence. He was transferred to Alexandria, and the merchants, who ſuffered him to go without demanding an indemnity, remained at Cairo at the peril of their lives and fortunes. Their ſituation, which has not changed, is nearly ſimilar to that of the

(f) The exportation of corn is prohibited, and Pococke remarked in 1737, that this meaſure had been detrimental to agriculture.

Dutch at Nangazaki; that is to ſay, ſhut up in a confined place, they live among themſelves, with ſcarcely any external communication; they even dread it, and go as little out as poſſible, to avoid the inſults of the common people, who hate the very name of the Franks, and the inſolence of the Mamlouks, who force them to diſmount from their aſſes in the middle of the ſtreets. In this kind of habitual impriſonment, they tremble every inſtant, leſt the plague ſhould oblige them entirely to ſhut themſelves up in their houſes, or ſome revolt expoſe their quarter to be plundered; leſt the chief of ſome party ſhould make a pecuniary demand *(g)*, or the Beys compel them to furniſh them with what they want, which is always attended with no little danger.

Nor do their mercantile affairs cauſe them leſs uneaſineſs. Obliged to ſell on credit, they are rarely paid at the ſtipulated time. There are no regulations even for bills of exchange, no recourſe can be had to juſtice,

(g) They have obſerved, that theſe extortions amount, annually, on an average, to ſixty-three thouſand livres (two thouſand ſix hundred and twenty-five pounds.)

becauſe

becauſe juſtice there is always worſe than bankruptcy. Every thing depends on conſcience, and that conſcience has been ſenſibly loſing its influence for ſome time paſt. Payments are delayed for whole years; frequently they receive no payment at all, and great deductions are almoſt always made. The Chriſtians, who are their principal correſpondents, are, in this reſpect, more faithleſs even than the Turks; and it is remarkable that, throughout the empire, the character of the Chriſtians is greatly inferior to that of the Muſſulmen; they are reduced, however, to the neceſſity of letting every thing paſs through ſuch hands. Add to this, that it is impoſſible ever to realize their capital; and to obtain an outſtanding debt they are under a neceſſity of giving ſtill greater credit. For all theſe reaſons, Cairo is the moſt precarious and moſt diſagreeable factory of the Levant. Fifteen years ago, there were nine French mercantile houſes at Cairo; in 1785, they were reduced to three, and ſhortly perhaps there will not remain one. The Chriſtians of Syria, ſettled ſome time ago at Leghorn, have given another fatal blow to

the French factories at this place, by the immediate correſpondence they carry on with their countrymen; and the Grand Duke of Tuſcany, who treats them like his other ſubjects, contributes every thing in his power to the encouragement of their trade.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the City of Cairo.

GRAND Cairo, of which I have already ſaid ſo much, is ſo celebrated a city that it well deſerves a ſtill more particular deſcription. This capital does not, in the country, bear the name of *El-Kahera*, given it by its founder; the Arabs know it only by that of *Maſr*, which has no known ſignification, but which ſeems to have been the ancient eaſtern name of the Lower Egypt *(b)*.

This city ſtands on the eaſtern bank of the Nile, at the diſtance of a quarter of a league from the river, which deprives it of a great advantage; for the loſs of which the canal, which comes up to it, cannot compenſate, ſince it contains no running water, except in the time of the inundation.

(b) This name of *Maſr* has the ſame conſonants with that of *Meſr*-aim, uſed by the Hebrews; which, on account of its plural form, ſeems properly to denote the inhabitants of the Delta, while thoſe of the Thebais are called *Beni Kous*, or children of Kous.

When

When we hear of *Grand Cairo*, we are led to imagine that it muſt be a capital, at leaſt, like thoſe of Europe; but if we reflect that, even among ourſelves, towns have only begun to be rendered convenient and elegant within theſe hundred years, we ſhall eaſily believe that, in a country where nothing has been improved ſince the tenth century, they muſt partake of the common barbariſm; and, indeed, we ſhall find that Cairo contains none of thoſe public or private edifices, thoſe regular ſquares, or well-built ſtreets, in which the architect diſplays his genius. Its environs are full of heaps of dirt, formed by the rubbiſh which is accumulating every day *(i)*, while the multitude of tombs, and the ſtench of the common ſewers, are at once offenſive to the ſmell and the ſight. Within the walls, the ſtreets are winding and narrow; and as they are not paved, the crowds of men, camels, aſſes, and dogs, with which they are thronged, raiſe a very diſagreeable duſt; individuals often water their doors, and

(i) Sultan Selim had appointed boats to carry it to the ſea; but this regulation has been laid aſide, to divert the money to other purpoſes.

to

to this duſt ſucceeds mud and peſtiferous exhalations. Contrary to the general cuſtom of the eaſt, the houſes have two and three ſtories, over which is a terrace of ſtone or tiles; in general they are of earth and bricks badly burnt; the reſt are of ſoft ſtone, of a fine grain, procured from the neighbouring Mount Mokattam. All theſe houſes have the appearance of priſons, for they have no light from the ſtreet; as it is extremely dangerous to have many windows in ſuch a country: they even take the precaution to make the entering door very low. The rooms within are ill contrived. Among the great, however, are to be found a few ornaments and conveniencies, their vaſt halls, eſpecially, in which water ſpouts up into marble baſons, are peculiarly well adapted to the climate. The paved floor, inlaid with marble and coloured earthern ware, is covered with mats and mattreſſes, and over all is ſpread a rich carpet, on which they ſit croſs-legged. Around the wall is a ſort of ſofa, with cuſhions, to ſupport the back and elbows; and above, at the height of ſeven or eight feet, a range of ſhelves, decked out with China and Japaneſe porcelain. The walls, naked in other reſpects,

are

are chequered with ſentences extracted from the Koran, and painted foliage and flowers, with which alſo the porticos of the Beys are covered; the windows have neither glaſs, nor moving ſaſhes, but only an open lattice work, which frequently coſts more than our glazing. The light enters from the inner courts, from whence the ſycamores reflect a verdure pleaſing to the eye. An opening to the north, or at the top of the cieling, admits a refreſhing breeze, while, by a whimſical contradiction, they wrap themſelves up in warm woollen cloths and furs. The rich pretend by this means to eſcape diſeaſes; but the common people, with their blue ſhirts and hard mats, are leſs liable to take cold, and enjoy better health.

SECT. I.

Of the Population of Cairo and Egypt.

The population of Cairo has frequently been a ſubject of diſpute. If we may credit the head officer of the cuſtoms, Anthony Faraoun, cited by Baron De Tott, it approaches ſeven hundred thouſand ſouls, including Boulak, a port

port and ſuburb detached from the city; but all calculations of the number of inhabitants in Turkey are arbitrary, as no regiſters are kept of births, deaths, or marriages. The Mahometans have even ſuperſtitious prejudices againſt numbering their people. The Chriſtians may indeed be eſtimated by means of their tickets of capitation *(k)*. All we know with certainty is, that, according to the plan of M. Niebuhr, taken in 1761, Cairo is three leagues in circumference, which is about the ſame with Paris, by the line of the Boulevards. Within this ſpace is compriſed a number of gardens, courts, vacant grounds and ruins. Now, if Paris, within the Boulevards, does not contain above ſeven hundred thouſand inhabitants, though the houſes are five ſtories high, it is difficult to conceive that Cairo, where they are only two ſtories, can contain more than two hundred and fifty thouſand. It is equally impracticable to form a juſt eſtimate of the population of all Egypt. Nevertheleſs, as it is known that the number of towns and villages does not exceed two thouſand three hun-

(k) Called *karadj*; *k* is here the Spaniſh *jota*.

dred *(l)*, and the number of inhabitants in each of them, one with another, including Cairo itſelf, is not more than a thouſand, the total cannot be more than two millions three hundred thouſand. The cultivable lands, according to Danville, contain two thouſand one hundred ſquare leagues, whence there reſults, for each ſquare league, one thouſand one hundred and forty-two inhabitants. This number, which is greater than even that of France, may lead us to imagine that Egypt is not ſo depopulated as it has been repreſented; but if we obſerve that the lands never lie fallow, but are continually productive, it muſt be allowed that its population is very little in compariſon of what it has been, and of what it is capable of becoming.

Among the ſingularities which appear moſt extraordinary to a ſtranger at Cairo, may be

(l) Danville had ſeen two liſts of villages in Egypt; one, which is of the laſt century, gives two thouſand ſix hundred and ninety-ſix towns and villages; the other, of the middle of the preſent century, two thouſand four hundred and ninety-five, nine hundred and fifty-ſeven of which are in the Said, and one thouſand four hundred and thirty-nine in the Delta: that I have given is of 1783.

mentioned

mentioned the great number of ugly dogs which roam about the ſtreets, and the kites which ſkim over the houſes, with frequent and doleful cries. The Muſſulmen kill neither of theſe, though they are both held to be unclean *(m)*; on the contrary, they often throw them the fragments of their tables; and devotees even endow charitable foundations of bread and water for the dogs. Theſe animals have beſides the reſource of the common ſewers, which, however, does not prevent them from ſuffering greatly by hunger and thirſt; but it is very aſtoniſhing that theſe extremities never occaſion madneſs. Proſper Alpinus has already made this remark in his treatiſe on the Phyſic of the Egyptians. Canine madneſs is equally unknown in Syria; the name of the malady, however, is to be found in the Arabic language, and is not borrowed from any foreign tongue.

(m) The turtle-doves, which are extremely numerous build their neſts in the houſes; and even the children do not touch them.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Of the Diſeaſes of Egypt.

SECT. I.

Of Blindneſs.

THIS malady, of which ſo much as been ſaid, is not the only remarkable one in Egypt; there are ſeveral which equally deſerve our notice.

Yet nothing can appear more extraordinary to a ſtranger than the prodigious number of perſons whoſe ſight is either loſt or impaired, and which is ſo great, that out of a hundred perſons I have met while walking the ſtreets of Cairo, twenty have been quite blind, ten wanting an eye, and twenty others have had their eyes red, purulent, or blemiſhed. Almoſt every one wears a fillet, a token of an approaching or convaleſcent ophthalmy; but nothing aſtoniſhed me more than the indifference and apathy with which they ſupport ſo dreadful a misfortune. *It was decreed,* ſays

ſays the Muſſulman: *praiſe be to God! God has willed it,* ſays the Chriſtian, *bleſſed be his name.* This reſignation is undoubtedly the beſt reſource when the evil has happened; but, as it prevents an enquiry into the cauſe of the diſorder, it precludes the diſcovery of its cure. Some phyſicians among us have written on this diſtemper, but from not being acquainted with all the circumſtances, could not treat it with ſufficient accuracy. I ſhall therefore add a few obſervations, which may aſſiſt others in future enquiries.

1ſt. Defluxions on the eyes are not peculiar to Egypt; they are alſo frequent in Syria, with this difference, that they are there leſs general; and it is remarkable that the inhabitants of the ſea-coaſt alone are ſubject to them.

2d. In the city of Cairo, which is always full of filth, theſe diſorders are more prevalent than in all the reſt of Egypt *(n)*. The common people are more liable to them than perſons in eaſy circumſtances, and the natives more than foreigners. The Mamlouks

(n) It muſt be obſerved, however, that the blind people of the villages come and reſide in the *moſque of flowers*, where they have a ſort of hoſpital.

are rarely attacked by them; and the peaſants of the Delta, are more ſubject to them than the Bedouin Arabs.

3d. Theſe defluxions happen at no certain ſeaſon, notwithſtanding what is ſaid by Proſper Alpinus. They are an endemial diſorder, common to every month of the year, and to every age.

In reaſoning from theſe facts, it ſeems to me that we cannot admit the ſoutherly winds as a principal cauſe, ſince, in that caſe, this complaint would be peculiar to the month of April, and the Bedouins be affected with it like the peaſants; nor can we aſcribe theſe maladies to any ſubtile duſt with which the air is filled, becauſe the peaſants are more expoſed to this than the inhabitants of towns; the cuſtom of ſleeping on the terraces ſeems a much more probable cauſe *(o)*; but it is neither confined to this country, nor adequate to the effects aſcribed to it; for in countries remote from the ſea, as the valley of Balbec, the Diarbekar, the plains of Hauran, and the mountains, the inhabitants ſleep alſo on their terraces, and yet their ſight is not

(o) See De Tott's Memoirs, part IV. T.

injured.

injured. If, therefore, at Cairo, throughout the Delta, and on the coaſt of Syria, it is dangerous to ſleep in the open air, this air muſt acquire ſome noxious quality from the vicinity of the ſea: and this quality doubtleſs is moiſture combined with heat, which then becomes a firſt principle of theſe diſorders. The ſaline quality of the air, ſo remarkable in the Delta, contributes ſtill farther to this, by the irritation and itching it occaſions in the eyes, as I have myſelf experienced.

The uſual diet of the Egyptians appears likewiſe to be a powerful cauſe. The cheeſe, ſour milk, honey, confection of grapes, green fruits, and raw vegetables, which are the ordinary food of the people, produce in the ſtomach a diſorder, which phyſicians have obſerved to affect the ſight; the raw onions, eſpecially, which they devour in great quantities, have a peculiar heating quality, as the Monks of Syria made me remark on myſelf. Bodies thus nouriſhed, abound in corrupted humours, which are conſtantly endeavouring a diſcharge. Diverted from the ordinary channels, by habitual perſpiration, they fly to the exterior parts, and fix themſelves where

they find the leaſt reſiſtance. They therefore naturally attack the head, becauſe the Egyptians, by ſhaving it once a week, and covering it with a prodigiouſly hot head-dreſs, principally attract to that the perſpiration; and if the head receives ever ſo ſlight an impreſſion of cold, on being uncovered, this perſpiration is ſuppreſſed, and falls upon the teeth, or ſtill more readily on the eyes, as being the tendereſt part. On every freſh cold this organ is weakened, and at length entirely deſtroyed. A diſpoſition to this diſorder, tranſmitted by generation, becomes a freſh cauſe of malady; and hence the natives are more expoſed to it than ſtrangers. It will appear more probable that the exceſſive perſpiration of the head is a principal cauſe, when we conſider that the ancient Egyptians, who went bare headed, are not mentioned by phyſicians as being ſo much afflicted with ophthalmies *(p)*; and that the Arabs of the deſert, who cover it very little, eſpecially when young, are equally exempt from them.

(p) Hiſtory, however, informs us that ſeveral of the Pharaohs died blind.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of the Small Pox.

Blindneſs in Egypt is in many inſtances occaſioned by the conſequences of the ſmall pox. This diſorder, which is very fatal in that country, is not treated after a good method. During the three firſt days, *debs*, or confection of grapes, honey, and ſugar, are adminiſtered to the ſick, and, after the ſeventh, they are allowed milk, meat, and ſalt-fiſh, as if they were in full health; at the period of ſuppuration, they are never purged, and they particularly avoid waſhing their eyes, though they are full of pus, and their eyelids cloſed by the glutinous matter; this operation they never perform till after forty days, and, in that time, the pus, by irritating the ball, has produced an inflammation which affects the whole eye. Inoculation is not unknown among them, but they make little uſe of it; nor is it more practiſed by the Syrians and the inhabitants of

Anadolia, who have long been acquainted with it *(q)*.

This improper regimen is certainly far more pernicious than the climate, which is by no means unhealthy *(r)*. To unwholeſome food, eſpecially, muſt we attribute both the deformity of the beggars, and the miſerable appearance of the children at Cairo, which are no where to be met with ſo miſſhapen and wretched. Their hollow eyes, their pale and puffed faces, ſwollen bellies, meagre extremities, and yellow ſkins, make them always ſeem as if they had not long to live. Their ignorant mothers pretend that this is the effect of the *evil eye* of ſome envious perſon, which has bewitched them; and this ancient prejudice *(s)* is ſtill general in Turkey; but the real cauſe is the badneſs of their food. In ſpite of the *Taliſmans*, there-

(q) They perform the operation by inſerting a thread into the fleſh, or by making the patient inhale, or ſwallow, the powder of dried puſtules.

(r) The Mamlouks are a proof of this, who, from wholeſome diet, and a proper regimen, enjoy the moſt robuſt ſtate of health.

(s) *Neſcio quis teneros oculus mihi faſcinat agnos.* Virgil.

fore,

fore *(t)*, an incredible number of them periſh, nor is any city more fatal to the population of the neighbouring country than Grand Cairo.

Another very general diſtemper at Cairo, is that which the vulgar there call the *bleſſed evil*, and which we alſo improperly term the *Neapolitan diſeaſe:* one half of Cairo is infected with it. The greateſt part of the inhabitants believe it proceeds from *fright*, from *witchcraft*, or from *uncleanlineſs*. Some of them ſuſpect the real cauſe; but as that is connected with a ſubject on which they are remarkably reſerved, they chuſe not to mention it. This *bleſſed evil* is very difficult to cure; mercury, under whatever form adminiſtered, generally fails: ſudorific vegetables ſucceed better, without being however infallible; happily, the virus is not very active, on account of the great natural and artificial perſpiration. We ſee there, as in Spain, old men carrying this diſorder about them to the

(t) We often ſee, in Egypt, little pieces of red ſtuff, or branches of coral, and coloured glaſs, hanging on the faces of children, and even of grown perſons. Theſe are ſuppoſed, by their colour and motion, to fix the firſt glance of the *envious*, for it is that, they ſay, which *ſtrikes*.

age of eighty. But its effects are fatal to children born with the infection, the danger alſo is imminent for ſuch as carry it into a cold country; for it there never fails to make a rapid progreſs, and ſhews itſelf always more inveterate from this tranſplantation. In Syria, at Damaſcus, and in the mountains, it is the more dangerous, as the winter is very ſevere there: when neglected, it terminates in all its well-known ſymptoms, as I myſelf witneſſed in two inſtances.

There is a troubleſome complaint peculiar to the climate of Egypt, which is a cutaneous eruption that returns every year. Towards the end of June, or the beginning of July, the body is covered with red ſpots and pimples, the ſmarting of which is very troubleſome. Several phyſicians, perceiving that this eruption regularly happened at the time of the new waters, have been of opinion, that it was occaſioned by the ſalts with which they ſuppoſed theſe waters impregnated; but the exiſtence of theſe ſalts is not proved, and a more ſimple reaſon may be aſſigned. I have already ſaid, that the waters of the Nile become corrupted, towards the end of April, in the bed of the river,

and,

and, when drunk, produce humours of a malignant quality. When the new water arrives, it occaſions a ſort of fermentation in the blood, which ſeparates the vicious humours, and expels them towards the ſkin, whither they are invited by the perſpiration. It is, in its effect, a real purgative depuration, and is always ſalutary.

Another diſeaſe, but too common at Cairo, is a ſwelling of the teſticles, which frequently turns to an enormous hydrocele. It is obſerved to attack, principally, the Greeks and Copts, and hence ariſes the ſuſpicion that it is occaſioned by the great quantity of oil which they make uſe of two-thirds of the year. It is conjectured, alſo, that the hot-baths contribute to it, the immoderate uſe of which produces other effects not leſs injurious to health *(u)*. I ſhall remark on

(u) The Egyptians, and the Turks in general, have a fondneſs for the ſtove-baths, difficult to account for in a country ſo hot as theirs: but this appears to me to ariſe more from prejudice than the pleaſure they find in them. The law of the Koran, which enjoins men a complete ablution after the conjugal act, is of itſelf a very powerful motive; and the gratification of their vanity in its obſervance is another not leſs efficacious: as for the women

on this occaſion, that in Syria, as well as in Egypt, conſtant experience has proved that brandy diſtilled from common figs, or from the fruit of the ſycamore tree, as well as that extracted from dates, and the fruit of the nopal, has a moſt immediate effect on the teſticles, which it renders hard and painful the third or fourth day after it has been drank; and if the uſe of it be not diſcon-

men they have other motives; Firſt, the bath is the only place in which they can make a parade of their luxury, and regale themſelves with melons, fruits, paſtry, and other delicacies. Secondly, they believe, as Proſper Alpinus has obſerved, that the bath gives them that *embonpoint* which paſſes for beauty. With reſpect to ſtrangers, their opinions differ according to their taſtes. Many merchants of Cairo are pleaſed with the baths, to others they are diſagreeable. For my part, I found the bath produce in me a vertigo, and trembling at the knees, which laſted two days. I confeſs it is very extraordinary that a water abſolutely ſcalding, and a profuſe ſweat, forced out by the convulſions of the lungs, as well as by the heat, ſhould be conſidered as giving ſo much pleaſure; nor do I envy the Turks either their opium, or their ſtoves, or their *too complaiſant Maſſers!*

(Theſe *Maſſers* are boys who knead the fleſh, crack all the joints, ſcrape off the ſcurf, eradicate the ſuperfluous hairs, rub the body gently, and are ſaid to be ſubſervient to the pleaſures of the bather. T.)

tinued,

tinued, the diſorder degenerates into a confirmed hydrocele.

Brandy made from dried raiſins has not the ſame bad effect; it is always mixed with anniſeeds, and is very ſtrong, being diſtilled no leſs than three times. The Chriſtians of Syria, and the Copts of Egypt, make great uſe of it; the latter, eſpecially, drink whole bottles of it at their ſupper: I imagined this an exaggeration, but I have myſelf had ocular proofs of its truth, though nothing could equal my aſtoniſhment that ſuch exceſſes do not produce inſtant death, or, at leaſt, every ſymptom of the moſt inſenſible drunkenneſs.

The ſpring, which in Egypt is the ſummer of our climates, brings with it malignant fevers, which ſoon arrive at a criſis. A French phyſician, who has had opportunities to obſerve a great number of them, has remarked, that the bark, given in the intermiſſions, in doſes of two or three ounces, has frequently ſaved the patient at the laſt extremity *(x)*. As ſoon as the diſeaſe appears, the patient muſt be rigorouſly reſtricted to a vegetable

(x) The next day he always adminiſters a clyſter to expel the bark.

acid

acid regimen; meat is prohibited, fiſh likewiſe, and above all, eggs; the latter are a ſort of poiſon in Egypt. In this country, as in Syria, experience proves that bleeding is always more injurious than beneficial, even in caſes where it appears to be moſt neceſſary: the reaſon of which is, that bodies nouriſhed with unwholeſome aliments, ſuch as green fruits, raw vegetables, cheeſe and olives, have, in fact, but little blood, and a great quantity of humours. The Egyptians are in general of a bilious habit, as appears from their eyes and their black eye-brows, their brown complexion, and meagre make. Their habitual malady is the cholic; and almoſt all of them frequently complain of a ſourneſs in the throat, and an acid nauſea; emetics and cream of tartar are therefore very generally ſucceſsful.

The malignant fevers become ſometimes epidemic, in which caſe they are eaſily miſtaken for the plague, of which I ſhall next ſpeak.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Of the Plague.

Some perſons have attempted to eſtabliſh an opinion that the plague originates in Egypt; but this ſuppoſition, founded on vague prejudices, ſeems to be diſproved by facts. The European merchants who have been ſettled for many years at Alexandria, concur with the Egyptians in declaring that the plague never proceeds from the interior parts of the country *(y)*, but firſt makes its appearance, on the coaſt, at Alexandria; from Alexandria it paſſes to Roſetta, from Roſetta to Cairo, from Cairo to Damietta, and through the reſt of the Delta. They further obſerve, that it is invariably preceded by the arrival of ſome veſſel coming from Smyrna or Conſtantinople; and that if the plague has been violent in one of theſe cities during

(y) Proſper Alpinus, a Venetian phyſician, who wrote in 1591, ſays alſo, that the plague never originates in Egypt; that it is brought from Greece, Syria, and Barbary; that the heats deſtroy it, &c. See *Medecina Ægyptiorum*, p. 28.

the

the ſummer, the danger is the greater for themſelves the following winter. It appears certain, that it really originates from Conſtantinople, where it is perpetuated by the abſurd negligence of the Turks, which is ſo great that they publicly ſell the effects of perſons dead of that diſtemper. The ſhips which go to Alexandria never fail to carry furs and woollen cloths purchaſed on theſe occaſions, which they expoſe to ſale in the Bazar of the city, and thereby ſpread the contagion. The Greeks who deal in theſe goods are almoſt always the firſt victims. By degrees the infection reaches Roſetta, and at length Cairo, following the uſual road by which the trade is carried on. As ſoon as it is confirmed, the European merchants ſhut themſelves and their domeſtics up in their *Kans*, and have no further external communication with the city. Their proviſions, depoſited at the gate of the Kan, are received there by the porter, who takes them up with iron tongs, and plunges them into a barrel of water provided for this purpoſe. If it is neceſſary to ſpeak to any one, they always keep at ſuch a diſtance as to prevent touching with their clothes, or breathing on one another; by

which means they preſerve themſelves from this dreadful calamity, unleſs by ſome accidental neglect of theſe precautions. Some years ago, a cat which paſſed by one of the terraces into the houſes of our merchants at Cairo, conveyed the plague to two of them, one of whom died.

It will eaſily be imagined what a tireſome ſtate of impriſonment this muſt be: it continues for three or four months, during which time they have no other amuſement than walking, in the evening, on the terraces, or playing at cards.

We obſerve in the plague ſeveral very remarkable varieties. At Conſtantinople it prevails during the ſummer, and is greatly weakened, or entirely ceaſes, in the winter. In Egypt, on the contrary, it is moſt violent in winter, and infallibly ends in the month of June. This apparent contrariety may be explained on the ſame principle. The winter deſtroys the plague at Conſtantinople, becauſe the cold there is very ſevere, and the ſummer revives it, becauſe the heat is very humid, on account of the ſeas, foreſts, and adjacent mountains. In Egypt, the winter nouriſhes the plague,

plague, becauſe it is mild and humid; but the ſummer deſtroys it, becauſe it is hot and dry. It ſeems to act on it as on fleſh meat, which it does not ſuffer to corrupt. Heat is not prejudicial, but as it is combined with humidity *(z)*. Egypt is afflicted with the plague every fourth or fifth year, and the ravages it cauſes would depopulate the country, were it not for the great numbers of ſtrangers who reſort thither from all parts of the empire, and in a great meaſure repair its loſſes.

In Syria the plague is much leſs common: five-and-twenty years have elapſed ſince it has been known there. This ariſes, no doubt, from the ſmall number of veſſels which come directly from Conſtantinople. It is remarked likewiſe, that it does not naturalize itſelf ſo eaſily to that province. When brought from the Archipelago, or even from Damietta, into the harbours of Latakia, Saide, or Acre, it will not ſpread: it rather chuſes

(z) At Cairo, it is obſerved, that the water-carriers, continually wet with the freſh water they carry in ſkins upon their backs, are never ſubject to the plague; but in this caſe it is *lotion*, and not humidity.

preliminary

preliminary circumſtances, and a more complex route; but when it paſſes directly from Cairo to Damaſcus, all Syria is ſure to be infected.

The doctrine of predeſtination, and ſtill more the barbariſm of the government, have hitherto prevented the Turks from attempting to guard againſt this deſtructive diſeaſe: the ſucceſs, however, of the precautions taken by the Franks, has of late begun to make ſome impreſſion on many of them. The Chriſtians of the country who traffic with our merchants, would be diſpoſed to ſhut themſelves up like them; but this they cannot do without permiſſion from the Porte. It ſeems, indeed, as if the Divan would at length pay ſome attention to this object, if it be true that an edict was iſſued laſt year for the eſtabliſhment of a Lazaretto at Conſtantinople, and three others at Smyrna, Candia, and Alexandria. The government of Tunis adopted this wiſe meaſure ſome years ago: but the Turkiſh police is every where ſo wretched, that little ſucceſs can be hoped for from theſe eſtabliſhments, notwith-

ſtanding their extreme importance to commerce, and the ſafety of the Mediterranean ſtates *(a)*.

(a) The very laſt year afforded a proof of this, ſince as violent a plague as ever was known, broke out there. It was brought by veſſels coming from Conſtantinople, the maſters of which corrupted the guards, and came into port without performing quarantine.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Deſcriptive Sketch of Egypt reſumed.

EGYPT might ſtill furniſh matter for many other obſervations; but as they are either foreign to my purpoſe, or may be included in thoſe which I ſhall have occaſion to make on Syria, I ſhall purſue them no farther.

If the reader remembers my deſcription of the nature and aſpect of the country; if he figures to himſelf a flat plain, interſected with canals, under water during three months, marſhy and rank with vegetation for three others, and duſty and parched the remainder of the year: if he imagines a number of wretched mud-walled and brick villages, naked and ſun-burnt peaſants, buffaloes, camels, ſycamore and date-trees thinly ſcattered, lakes, cultivated fields, and vacant grounds of conſiderable extent; and adds beſides a ſun darting his rays from an

azure ſky, almoſt invariably free from clouds; and winds conſtantly blowing, but not always with the ſame ſtrength, he will have formed a tolerably juſt idea of the natural aſpect of this country. He may have judged of its political ſtate from the diviſion of the inhabitants into tribes, ſects, and claſſes; from the nature of a government, which neither reſpects the perſon or property of its ſubjects; and from the abuſes of an unlimited power entruſted to a rude and licentious ſoldiery. He may, in ſhort, have formed a juſt eſtimation of the ſtrength of this government, by conſidering its military eſtabliſhment, and the character of its troops, by obſerving that, throughout all Egypt and on its frontiers, there is not a ſingle fort nor redoubt, neither artillery nor engineers; and that its whole navy conſiſts in twenty-eight veſſels and cayaſſes of Suez, armed each with four ruſty ſwivels, and manned by ſailors who know not even the uſe of the compaſs.

From theſe facts the reader may judge for himſelf what opinion he ought to form of this country, which I may have repreſented

ſented in a different point of view from ſome other writers *(b)*. He ought not to be aſtoniſhed at this diverſity; nothing can differ more than the judgments of travellers reſpecting the countries they have viſited: one will frequently diſparage what another has extolled; and deſcribe as a Paradiſe what he who comes after him may conſider as having no charms. They are particularly reproached with this contrariety of opinions, but it is in fact common to them and their critics, ſince it is founded in the very nature of things. Notwithſtanding all our efforts, our judgments are much leſs directed by the real merits of objects, than by the impreſſions we receive, or carry with us in viewing them. Daily experience demonſtrates that foreign ideas always obtrude themſelves; and hence it is that the ſame country which appears beautiful to us at one moment, ſeems equally diſagreeable at another. Beſides that it is impoſſible to diſengage ourſelves from the prejudices of early habits. The inhabitant of the mountains diſlikes the plain; the inhabitant of the plain is diſpleaſed with the mountains.

(b) See *De Maillet.*

The Spaniard wiſhes for a clear ſky; the Dane prefers thick weather. We admire the verdure of our fields; the Swede is better pleaſed with the whiteneſs of his ſnow; and the Laplander, tranſported from his ſmoky hut, to the groves of Chantilly would die with heat and melancholy. Every man has his peculiar taſtes, according to which he judges. To an Egyptian, I conceive that Egypt is, and always will be, the moſt beautiful country upon earth. But if I may be permitted to give my judgment, from what I have myſelf ſeen, I confeſs that I cannot entertain ſo high an opinion of it. I am willing to do juſtice to its extreme fertility, to the variety of its productions, and the advantages of its ſituation for commerce; I admit that Egypt is but little ſubject to the variations of weather, which occaſion the failure of harveſts with us; that the hurricanes of America are unknown there; and that the earthquakes which have laid waſte Portugal and Italy in our days, are there extremely rare, though not without example *(c)*. I admit

(c) There was a very violent one, for inſtance, in the year 1112.

even

even that the heat, which is ſo inſupportable to Europeans, is no inconvenience to the natives; but I cannot be reconciled to the peſtiferous ſouthern blaſt, the north-eaſt winds, which are conſtantly the cauſe of violent headachs, or thoſe ſwarms of ſcorpions, gnats, and eſpecially flies, which are ſo numerous, that it is impoſſible to eat without running the riſk of ſwallowing them. Beſides, no country preſents ſuch a ſameneſs of aſpect. A boundleſs naked plain; an horizon every where flat and uniform *(d)*; date trees with ſlender and bare trunks, or mud-walled huts on the cauſeways, are all it offers to the eye, which no where beholds that richneſs of landſcape, that variety of objects, or diverſity of ſcenery which true taſte finds ſo delightful. No country is leſs pictureſque, leſs adapted to the pencil of the painter, or the deſcriptions of the poet: nothing can be ſeen of what conſtitutes the charm and beauty of their pictures; and it is remarkable, that neither the Arabs, nor the ancients make any mention of Egyptian poets.

(d) The reader may conſult the views in Norden, in which this is very conſpicuous.

What indeed could an Egyptian ſing on the reed of Geſner or Theocritus? He ſees neither limpid ſtreams, nor verdant lawns, nor ſolitary caves; and is equally a ſtranger to vallies, mountain ſides, and pendent rocks.

Thompſon could not there have known either the whiſtling of the winds in the foreſt, the rolling of thunder among the mountains, or the peaceful majeſty of ancient woods: he could not have obſerved the awful tempeſt, nor the ſweet tranquillity of the ſucceeding calm. The face of nature, there eternally the ſame, preſents nothing but well fed herds, fertile fields, a muddy river, a ſea of freſh water, and villages which, riſing out of it, reſemble iſlands. Should the eye reach the horizon, we are terrified at finding nothing but ſavage deſerts, where the wandering traveller, exhauſted with fatigue and thirſt, ſhudders at the immenſe ſpace which ſeparates him from the world. In vain he implores heaven and earth: his cries, loſt in the boundleſs plain, are not even returned by an echo; deſtitute of every thing, and ſeparated from mankind, he periſhes in an agony of deſpair, amid

amid a gloomy desert, without even the consolation of knowing he has excited the sympathising tear. The contrast of this melancholy scene, so near, has probably given to the cultivated fields of Egypt all their charms. The barrenness of the desert becomes a foil to the plenty of the plains, watered by the river; and the aspect of the parched sands, so totally unproductive, adds to the pleasures the country offers. These may have been more numerous in former times, and might revive under the influence of a well regulated government: but at present, the riches of nature produce not the fruits which might be expected. In vain may travellers celebrate the gardens of Rosetta and of Cairo. The Turks are strangers to the art of gardening, so much cultivated by polished nations, and despise every kind of cultivation. Throughout the empire their gardens are only wild orchards, in which trees are planted without care or art, yet have not even the merit of pleasing irregularity. In vain may they tell us of the orange-trees and cedars, which grow naturally in the fields. Accustomed as we are to combine the ideas of opulence and culture with these trees,

since

ſince with us they are neceſſarily connected with them, we do not diſcover the deception. In Egypt, where they are frequent, and, as I may ſay, vulgar, they are aſſociated with the miſery of the huts they cover, and recall only the idea of poverty and deſolation. In vain do they deſcribe the Turk ſoftly repoſing under their ſhade, and happy in ſmoking his pipe without reflection. Ignorance and folly, no doubt, have their enjoyments, as well as wit and learning; but, for my own part, I confeſs I could never bring myſelf to envy the repoſe of ſlaves, or to digniſy inſenſibility with the name of happineſs. I ſhould not even have been able to conceive from whence could proceed the enthuſiaſm with which ſome travellers have extolled Egypt, had not experience revealed to me the ſecret motives.

SECT. II.

Of the Exaggerations of Travellers.

It has long been remarked, that travellers particularly affect to boaſt of the countries through

through which they themſelves have travelled, inſomuch that the exaggeration of their relations having been frequently diſcovered, we have been warned by a proverb, to be on our guard againſt their falſehoods *(e)*; but the error ſtill remains, becauſe the cauſes have not ceaſed. Theſe in fact originate with every one of us, and the reproach not unfrequently belongs even to thoſe who make it. For, let us obſerve a traveller, newly arrived from ſome diſtant country, and endeavouring to amuſe the idleneſs and curioſity of the company around him. The novelty of his relation procures him attention, which even extends to perſonal reſpect. He is loved becauſe he amuſes, and becauſe his pretenſions claſh not with thoſe of others. On his ſide, he is ſoon ſenſible that he ceaſes to be intereſting, when he can no longer raiſe new ideas. The neceſſity of ſupporting, the deſire even of increaſing this power of pleaſing, induce him to beſtow higher colouring on his pictures; he paints the greateſt objects, that they may be the more ſtriking; and his ſucceſs encourages him to proceed.

(e) Multum mentitur qui multum vidit.

He

He catches the enthuſiaſm of his hearers, and, ſhortly, a kind of emulation takes place between him and his auditors, by which he returns, in wondrous narrative, what he receives in admiration. The marvellous in what he has ſeen, is reflected, firſt upon himſelf, and, by a uſual conſequence, on thoſe who have heard, and in their turn relate it. Thus does vanity, which pervades every thing, become one of the cauſes of the propenſity we all have, either to believe, or recount prodigies. We have beſides leſs deſire to be inſtructed than amuſed, and it is from theſe reaſons that tale-makers of every kind, have always held a diſtinguiſhed rank in the eſteem of mankind, and in the claſs of writers.

There is alſo another cauſe of the enthuſiaſm of travellers. Remote from the objects which have given us pleaſure, the imagination takes fire; abſence again inflames deſire, and the ſatiety of ſurrounding enjoyments beſtows a new charm on whatever is no longer within our reach. We regret a country from which we were often anxious to eſcape; and pleaſe ourſelves with the remembrance of places in which, were we there, we could not

not bear to remain. Travellers who have only paſſed through Egypt, are not to be ranked in this claſs, as they have not time to loſe the illuſion of novelty; but this remark applies to whoever has made a long reſidence in the country. Our merchants know it; and have made a very juſt obſervation on this ſubject: they remark that thoſe among them, who have experienced the greateſt inconveniencies from reſiding in a foreign country, are no ſooner returned to France, than every thing diſagreeable is effaced from their memory; their recollection aſſumes cheerful colours, and in two years after, one would not imagine they had ever been there. "Do you ſtill think pro-" perly of us, and our ſituation," wrote one who ſtill reſides at Cairo to me lately? "Do " you retain juſt ideas of this place of " miſery *(f)*; for we have experienced that

(f) No perſon has leſs reaſon than myſelf to be diſſatisfied with Egypt; I experienced from our merchants in that country the utmoſt generoſity and politeneſs; I never met with any diſagreeable accident, nor was even obliged to alight in reverence of the Mamlouks. It is true that, notwithſtanding it is held ſo diſgraceful, I always walked on foot in the ſtreets.

" all

" all thoſe who return to Europe, ſo far for-
" get them as to aſtoniſh us ?" Such general and ſuch powerful cauſes would not have failed to produce their uſual effect upon myſelf, had I not taken particular pains to guard myſelf againſt them, and to retain my former impreſſions, in order to give my deſcriptions the only merit they can have, that of truth. It is time now to proceed to objects more extenſively intereſting; but, as the reader would not pardon me ſhould I quit Egypt without mentioning the ruins and the pyramids, I ſhall content myſelf with beſtowing on them a few words.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the Ruins and the Pyramids.

I HAVE already explained how much the conſtant difficulty of travelling in Egypt, which has increaſed of late years, is unfavourable to reſearches into antiquities. For want of means, and above all of favourable circumſtances, we are reduced to be content with ſeeing what others have already ſeen, and to relate nothing but what they have already publiſhed. For this reaſon, I ſhall not repeat what has been repeated more than once in Paul Lucas, Maillet, Sicard, Pocock, Greaves, Norden, and Niebuhr, and ſtill more lately in the Letters of M. Savary. I ſhall confine myſelf to a few general remarks.

The pyramids of Djiza are a ſtriking example of the difficulty which I have already ſaid attends the making of obſervations. Though only four leagues diſtant from Cairo, where the Franks reſide, though they have been viſited by a crowd of travellers, their

true dimenſions are not yet known with certainty. Several times has their height been meaſured by geometrical methods, and each operation has given a different reſult *(g)*. In order to decide this queſtion, a new and accurate menſuration ſhould be undertaken by perſons of known abilities. In the interim, however, we may ſafely aſſert that thoſe are miſtaken who have affirmed the height of the great pyramid is equal to the length of the baſe, ſince the angle at the vertex is ſenſibly too large. The knowledge of the true length of this baſe appears to me the more intereſting, as I am inclined to think it has ſome affinity with one of the ſquare meaſures of the Egyptians; and if the dimenſions of the ſtones ſhould be found frequently the ſame, we may poſſibly from them deduce their other meaſures.

The difficulty of underſtanding the deſcription of the inſide of the pyramid, has been frequently complained of, and, in fact, without being well verſed in the nature of

(g) To the liſt of theſe differences, given by M. Savary, may be added a late menſuration, which aſſigns ſix hundred feet to each face of the Great Pyramid, and four hundred and eighty feet for its perpendicular height.

plans, it is not eaſy to form any adequate idea from engravings. The beſt method to convey ſuch an idea of it, would bé to form of clay, or baked earth, a pyramid in miniature, in the reduced proportion, for inſtance, of an inch to a toiſe. Such an imitation would be eight feet four inches at the baſe, and near ſeven and one half in height. By cutting it into two portions from top to bottom, it would be poſſible to form the firſt channel, which deſcends obliquely, the gallery which aſcends in the ſame manner, and the ſepulchral chamber at the extremity. Norden would furniſh the beſt deſcription; but ſuch a model muſt be executed by an artiſt accuſtomed to this ſort of work.

The ledge of rock on which the pyramids are built does not riſe more than forty or fifty feet above the level of the plain. The ſtone of which it conſiſts, is, as I have ſaid, white and calcareous, of a grain reſembling that of the ſtone known in ſome provinces of France, by the name of *Rairie*. That of the pyramids is of a ſimilar nature. It was imagined, at the beginning of the preſent century, on the authority of Herodotus, that the materials of which they have been built had been

brought from a diſtance; but travellers, obſerving the reſemblance I am ſpeaking of, think it more natural to conclude they were taken from the rock itſelf; and, at this day, the narrative of Herodotus is treated as a fable, and ſuch a removal of the ſtones as an abſurdity. It has been calculated that the levelling of the rock would furniſh nearly enough, and the deficiency is ſupplied by ſuppoſed ſubterranean cavities, which are magnified at pleaſure. But if the ancient opinion have its improbabilities, the modern ſyſtem is mere ſuppoſition. It is by no means ſufficient to ſay: "it is incredible they ſhould "have tranſported whole quarries from ſuch "a diſtance, and abſurd to multiply expen-"ces to ſo enormous an amount." In whatever relates to the opinions, and governments of ancient nations, it is difficult to ſay what is probable. However improbable therefore the fact in queſtion may ſeem, if we conſider that the hiſtorian who relates it drew his materials from the original archives of the ancient Egyptians; that he is remarkably accurate in every thing we are able to verify; that the Lybic rock no where preſents elevations ſimilar to thoſe which

which are ſuppoſed, and that the ſubterranean cavities remain ſtill to be diſcovered; if we recollect the immenſe quarries which extend from Saouadi to Manfalout, for the ſpace of five-and-twenty leagues; if we conſider, in ſhort, that the ſtones extracted from them, which are of the ſame kind, could have been intended for no other viſible purpoſe *(b)*; we ſhall at leaſt be tempted to ſuſpend our judgment, until the fact be decided by better evidence.

Other writers, in like manner, tired of the opinion that the pyramids were tombs, have converted them into temples or obſervatories. They conſider it as abſurd to ſuppoſe a wiſe and poliſhed nation would think the ſepulchre of its king a matter of ſo much importance, or that a prince would impoveriſh his people by forced labours, merely to encloſe a ſkeleton of five feet in a mountain of ſtones; but I repeat it, we judge of the ancients improperly, when we make our own opinions and cuſtoms a ſtandard of compa-

(b) I do not mean the pyramids of Djiza only, but all of them in general. Some of them, ſuch as thoſe of Bayamout, are neither founded on rocks, nor are there any rocks near. See Pococke.

riſon. The motives which influenced them, may appear to us extravagant, and poſſibly may really be ſo in the eye of reaſon, without having been leſs powerful, or leſs efficacious. Beſides, we muſt engage in endleſs and idle contradictions of all hiſtory, to ſuppoſe in them a wiſdom conformable to our principles: we reaſon too much from our own ideas, and do not ſufficiently attend to theirs. But from whichever we reaſon in the preſent diſpute, we may affirm that the pyramids never can have been aſtronomical obſervatories *(i)*, becauſe Mount Mokattam would have afforded a ſtill more elevated ſituation, and which bounds the former; becauſe every elevated obſervatory is uſeleſs in Egypt, where the country is very flat, and where the vapours hide the ſtars for ſeveral degrees above the horizon; becauſe it is impracticable to aſcend to the top of the pyramids in general; and becauſe it could not have been neceſſary

(i) It has been alleged the pyramids are built ſo as to correſpond with the four cardinal points; but the ancients, in the greateſt part of their monuments, have obſerved this practice, and it was well adapted to tombs, which, from their ideas of a reſurrection, Tartarus, Elyſium, &c. were connected with aſtronomy.

to

to erect *eleven* obſervatories ſo near each other as the eleven pyramids of different ſizes, which may be ſeen from Djiza. From theſe reaſons, we ſhall be led to think that Plato, who firſt ſuggeſted the idea in queſtion, could only have ſome particular caſes in view, or that he has in this inſtance only his ordinary merit of an eloquent writer.

If, on the other hand, we weigh the teſtimonies of the ancients, and local circumſtances; if we obſerve that near the pyramids there are thirty or forty monuments, which preſent rough outlines of the ſame pyramidal form; that this ſterile ſpot, remote from all cultivable land, poſſeſſes the qualities requiſite for an Egyptian cemetery, and that near it was that of the whole city of Memphis, *the Plain of Mummies*, we ſhall no longer doubt that the pyramids are only tombs. We ſhall ceaſe to wonder that the deſpots of a ſuperſtitious people ſhould have made it a point of importance and pride, to build for their ſkeletons impenetrable habitations, when we are informed that, even before the time of Moſes, it was a dogma at Memphis, that ſouls at the expiration of ſix thouſand years, ſhould return to the bo-

dies they had quitted. It was for this reaſon that ſo much pains were taken to preſerve the body from putrefaction, and that endeavours were made to retain even its form, by means of ſpices, bandages, and ſarcophagi. That which is ſtill in the ſepulchral chamber of the great pyramid, is preciſely of its natural dimenſions; and this chamber is ſo obſcure and narrow *(k)*, that it never can have contained more than one dead body. Attempts have been made to diſcover ſome myſtery in the ſubterranean cavity which deſcends perpendicularly within the pyramid, forgetting that it was the uniform practice of all antiquity to contrive communications with the inſide of their tombs, in order to perform, on certain days, preſcribed by their religion, the cuſtomary ceremonies; ſuch as libations, and offerings of food to the deceaſed. We muſt recur, therefore, to the ancient opinion, antiquated as it may ſeem, that the pyramids are tombs; and this hypotheſis, favoured by a variety of circumſtances, is ſtill more confirmed by their name, which, according to an analyſis conformable to every

(k) It is thirteen paces long by eleven wide, and nearly of the ſame height.

prin-

principle of etymology, I think I have discovered to ſignify *chamber*, or *cave* of the *dead (l)*.

(*l*) The word *pyramid*, is derived from the Greek Πυραμις, Πυραμιδος; but in the ancient Greek, the *υ* was pronounced *oo*; we ſhould therefore ſay *pooramis*. When the Greeks, after the Trojan war frequented Egypt, they could not have in their language the name of theſe prodigious edifices, which muſt have been new to them; they muſt have borrowed it from the Egyptians. *Pooramis* then is not Greek, but Egyptian. Now there is little doubt but the dialects of Egypt, which were various, had a great analogy with thoſe of the neighbouring countries, ſuch as Arabic and Syriac. In theſe languages it is certain the letter *p* is unknown; but it is no leſs true, that the Greeks, in adopting barbarous words, almoſt always changed them, and frequently confounded one ſound with another, which reſembled it. It is certain alſo, that in the words we know, *p* is continually taken for *b*, which very much reſembles it. Now, in the dialect of Paleſtine, *bour* (בור) ſignifies every excavation of the earth, a *ciſtern*, a *priſon* properly under ground, a *ſepulchre*. (See *Buxtorf*, *Lexicon Hebr.*) There remains *amis*, in which the final *s* appears to me a termination ſubſtituted for *t*, which did not ſuit the genius of the Greek tongue, and which made the oriental (המת) *a-mit*, *of the dead*, *bour a-mit*, *cave of the dead*; this ſubſtitution of the *s* for *t*, has an example in *atribis*, well known to be *atribit*. The learned may determine whether this etymology be not equally plauſible with many others.

The great pyramid is not the only one which has been opened. There is another at *Sakara*, the inſide of which appears conſtructed in the ſame manner. A few years ago, one of the Beys tried to open the third in ſize of thoſe that are at Djiza, to obtain the ſuppoſed treaſure he imagined concealed there. He attempted this on the ſame ſide, and at the ſame height at which the great one has been opened; but after forcing out two or three hundred ſtones, with conſiderable labour and expence, he relinquiſhed his avaricious enterprize. The time when the greateſt part of the pyramids were built is unknown, but that of the great one is ſo evident, that it ſhould never have been called in queſtion. Herodotus attributes it to Cheops, with a detail of circumſtances which prove his authors were well informed *(m)*. But Cheops, in his liſt, which is the beſt

(m) This prince, he tells us, reigned fifty years, twenty of which he employed in building the pyramids. The third part of the inhabitants of Egypt were employed, by forced ſervice, in hewing, tranſporting, and raiſing the ſtones.

extant,

extant, is the ſecond king after Proteus *(n)*, who was cotemporary with the Trojan war; whence it follows, that this pyramid was erected about one hundred and forty, or one hundred and ſixty years after the building of Solomon's temple, or eight hundred and ſixty years before Chriſt.

Deſtructive time, and the ſtill more deſtructive hand of man, which have ſo defaced and deſtroyed all the other monuments of antiquity, have hitherto been able to effect but little againſt the pyramids. The ſolidity of their conſtruction, and their enormous ſize, have ſecured them againſt every attempt, and ſeem to promiſe them an eternal duration. All travellers ſpeak of them with enthuſiaſm, and enthuſiaſm they may well inſpire. Theſe artificial mountains are firſt diſcovered at ten leagues diſtance. They ſeem to retire in proportion as they are approached; and when ſtill a league off, tower with ſuch loftineſs

(n) It is remarkable, that if we were to write the Egyptian name *Proteus*, as given by the Greeks, in *Phœnician* characters, we ſhould make uſe of the ſame letters we pronounce *pharao*; the final *o* in the Hebrew is an *h*, which, at the end of words, frequently becomes *t*.

above

above our heads, that we imagine ourſelves at their feet; but when at length we reach them, nothing can expreſs the various ſenſations they inſpire *(o)*. Their ſtupendous height, the ſteep declivity of their ſides, their prodigious ſurface, their enormous ſolidity, the diſtant ages they recall to memory, the recollection of the labour they muſt have coſt, and the reflection that theſe huge rocks are the work of man, ſo diminutive and feeble, who crawls at their feet, loſt in wonder,

(o) I know nothing, at Paris, ſo proper to give an idea of the pyramids, as the *Hôtel des Invalides*, ſeen from the *Cours la Reine*. The length of that building, being ſix hundred feet, is preciſely the ſame as the baſe of the great pyramid; but to conceive their height and ſolidity, we muſt ſuppoſe the front I have mentioned to riſe into a triangle; the perpendicular of which ſhould exceed the height of the dome of that building by two thirds of the dome itſelf, (it is three hundred feet high.) The ſame ſurface muſt be repeated on the four ſides of the ſquare, and the whole maſs contained in them be ſuppoſed ſolid, and offer to view nothing but an immenſe ſlope on every ſide, diſpoſed in ſteps.

[The Engliſh reader has only to ſuppoſe the vaſt ſquare of *Lincoln's-inn-fields*, the dimenſions of which are the exact baſe of the great pyramid, wholly filled up from ſide to ſide, and gradually riſing in a pyramidal form, to a height exceeding that of St. Paul's, by at leaſt one third. T.]

awe, humiliation, and reverence, altogether impreſs the mind of the ſpectator in a manner not to be deſcribed; but to this firſt tranſport other ſentiments ſoon ſucceed. Elevated as we are with ſo exalted a proof of the power of man, when we conſider the purpoſe for which theſe amazing works were intended, we cannot but view them with regret. We lament, that to conſtruct a uſeleſs ſepulchre, a whole nation ſhould have been rendered miſerable for twenty years: we ſhudder at the numberleſs acts of injuſtice and oppreſſion theſe tireſome labours muſt have coſt, in conveying, preparing, and piling up ſuch an immenſe maſs of ſtones; and we are inflamed with indignation at the tyranny of the deſpots who enforced theſe barbarous works, a ſentiment indeed which too frequently recurs on viewing the different monuments of Egypt. Thoſe labyrinths, temples, and pyramids, by their huge and heavy ſtructure, atteſt much leſs the genius of a nation, opulent and friendly to the arts, than the ſervitude of a people who were ſlaves to the caprices of their monarchs; and we are even inclined to pardon that avarice, which, by violating

violating their tombs, has fruſtrated their idle hopes: we beſtow leſs pity on theſe ruins; and while the lover of the arts beholds with indignation, at Alexandria, the columns of her palaces ſawed into *mill-ſtones*, the philoſopher, after the firſt emotion, occaſioned by the deſtruction of every fine work, cannot ſuppreſs a ſmile at the ſecret juſtice of that deſtiny, which reſtores to the people what coſt them ſo much fruitleſs toil, and which renders the pride of unprofitable luxury ſubſervient to the meaneſt of neceſſities.

The happineſs of the people, rather than the preſervation of the ancient monuments of Egypt, ſhould certainly dictate the wiſh of ſeeing that country under the government of another nation; but were it only in the latter point of view, ſuch a revolution would ſtill be much to be deſired. Were Egypt poſſeſſed by a nation friendly to the fine arts, diſcoveries might be made there, which would make us better acquainted with antiquity than any thing the reſt of the world can afford us. Perhaps even books might be found. It is not above three years ago, that upwards of one hundred volumes, written in an unknown

language, were dug up near Damietta *(p)*, but immediately committed to the flames, by command of the Shaiks of Cairo. Indeed the Delta no longer affords any very intereſting ruins, as they have been all deſtroyed by the wants, or the ſuperſtition of the inhabitants. But the Said, which is leſs inhabited, and the edge of the deſert, ſtill leſs peopled, poſſeſs ſeveral yet untouched. We may hope to find them ſtill more certainly in the Oaſes, thoſe iſlands ſeparated from the world by an ocean of ſand, where no traveller we know of, has ever penetrated ſince the time of Alexander. Theſe countries, in which formerly were cities and temples, having never been ſubject to the devaſtations of the Barbarians, muſt have preſerved their monuments, and the rather as it is probable they are but thinly inhabited, or perhaps entirely deſerted; and theſe monuments, buried in the ſands, muſt be preſerved there, as a depoſite for future generations. To a period leſs remote, poſſibly than we imagine, we muſt defer the gratification of our wiſhes and our

(p) I have this fact from ſome merchants of Acre, who told it me on the credit of a Marſeilles Captain, who, at that time was taking in a cargo of rice at Damietta.

hopes.

hopes. We may then be allowed to ſearch every part of the country, the banks of the Nile, and the ſands of Lybia. We may then be permitted to open the ſmall pyramid of Djiza, the total demolition of which would not coſt fifty thouſand livres (two thouſand pounds. It is probable too, that till that period, we muſt remain ignorant of the ſignification of the hieroglyphics; though, in my opinion, the means we at preſent poſſeſs might be ſufficient to explain them.

But enough of conjectures. It is now time to proceed to the examination of another country, the ancient and modern ſtate of which is not leſs intereſting even than that of Egypt.

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wo

Syria

MAP
of
SYRIA.
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
I. of Cyprus
Tarsus
Adana
Scanderoon
Ras el Kanzir
Aleppo
Bedouins Mawali
Bedouins of Saker and of Sardia
Bedouins of Anaza
and of Tai
DESERT of ARABIA
Plains of Hauran
Damascus
Tadmor or Palmyra
Hamah
Hassia
Latakia
Djebila
Tripoli
Cape Wedj
Beirout
Djebail
Tyre
Acre
Carmel Mt
Kaisaria
Jaffa
Yabna
Ekron
Ashdod
Ashkelon
Gaza
Hebron
Bethlehem
Jerusalem
Jericho
Dead Sea or Lake Asphaltites
Ruins of Towns
Bedouins of Gaza
French Leagues 25 to a Degree

TRAVELS

IN

EGYPT AND SYRIA.

STATE OF SYRIA.

CHAP. XX.

Geography and Natural History of Syria.

LEAVING Egypt by the Iſthmus which ſeparates Africa from Aſia, and following the coaſt of the Mediterranean, we enter a ſecond province of Turkey, known to us by the name of Syria. This name, which, like ſo many others, has been tranſmitted to us by the Greeks, is an abridgment of *Aſſyria*, which was firſt adopted by the Ionians who frequented thoſe coaſts, after the Aſſyrians of Niniveh had reduced that country to be a province of their empire *(a)*. The name of

(*a*) That is about the year 750 before Chriſt. This is the reaſon why Homer, who wrote a little before that time, no where uſes this name, though he ſpeaks of the inhabitants of the country, but employs the oriental word *aram*, changed into *arimean* and *erembos*.

Syria

Syria had not therefore ſo extenſive a ſignification as it has ſince obtained. It comprehended neither Phœnicia nor Paleſtine. The preſent inhabitants, who, according to the conſtant practice of the Arabs, have not adopted the Greek names, are ignorant of the name of *Syria (b)*; inſtead of which they call it *Barr-el-Sham (c)*, which ſignifies country of the left; and is the name given to the whole ſpace contained between two lines drawn, the one from Alexandretta to the Euphrates, and the other from Gaza to the deſert of Arabia, bounded on the eaſt by that deſert, and on the weſt by the Mediterranean. This name of country of the *left*, from its contraſt with that of the *Yamin*, or country of the *right*, indicates ſome intermediate place, as a common point, which muſt be Mecca; and from its alluſion to the worſhip of the ſun *(d)* proves

(b) Geographers, however, ſometimes write it *Souria*, from the conſtant change of the Greek upſilon into the Arabic waw.

(c) *El-ſham* alſo is the name of the city of Damaſcus, the reputed capital of Syria. I am at a loſs to diſcover why M. Savary has made it *el Shams*, or the *City of the Sun*.

(d) The ancient nations, who worſhipped the ſun, paid their homage at the moment of his riſing; their faces

proves at once, an origin anterior to Mahomet, and the exiſtence, which is already certain, of this worſhip, in the temple of the Caaba.

SECT. I.

General Appearance of the Country.

If we examine a map of Syria, we may obſerve that this country is in ſome meaſure only a chain of mountains, which diſtribute themſelves in various directions from one leading branch; and ſuch, in fact, is the appearance it preſents, whether we approach it from the ſide of the ſea, or by the immenſe plains of the deſert. We firſt diſcover, at a great diſtance, a clouded ridge, which runs north and ſouth, as far as the ſight extends; and, as we advance, diſtinguiſh the ſummits of mountains, which, ſometimes detached, and ſometimes united in

faces were therefore turned towards the eaſt. The north was on the *left*, the ſouth on their *right*, and the weſt behind them, called in the oriental languages, *acheron*, and *akaron*.

chains, uniformly terminate in one principal line which overtops them all; we may follow this line, without interruption, from its entry by the north, quite into Arabia. It firſt runs cloſe to the ſea, between Alexandretta and the Orontes, and, after opening a paſſage to that river, continues its courſe to the ſouthward, quitting, for a ſhort diſtance, the ſhore, and, in a chain of continued ſummits, ſtretches as far as the ſources of the Jordan, where it ſeparates into two branches, to encloſe, as it were, in a baſon, this river and its three lakes. In its courſe, it detaches from this line, as from a main trunk, an infinity of ramifications, ſome of which loſe themſelves in the deſert, where they form various encloſed hollows, ſuch as thoſe of Damaſcus and Hauran, while others advance toward the ſea, where they frequently end in ſteep declivities, as at Carmel, Nakoura, Cape Blanco, and in almoſt the whole country between Bairout *(e)* and Tripoli of Syria; but in general they gently terminate in plains, ſuch as thoſe of Antioch, Tripoli, Tyre, and Acre.

(e) The ancient Berytus.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of the Mountains.

Theſe mountains, as they vary their levels and ſituations, are alſo greatly changed in their form and appearance. Between Alexandretta and the Orontes, the firs, larches, oaks, box-trees, laurels, yews, and myrtles, with which they abound, give them an air of livelineſs, which delights the traveller, wearied with the melancholy nakedneſs of the iſle of Cyprus *(f)*. On ſome declivities he even meets with cottages, environed with fig-trees, and vineyards; and the ſight of theſe repays the fatigue he has endured on a road which, by rugged paths, leads him from the bottom of valleys to the tops of hills, and from the tops of hills to the bottoms of valleys. The inferior branches, which extend to the northward of Aleppo, on the contrary, preſent nothing but bare

(f) All veſſels which go to Alexandretta touch at Cyprus, the ſouthern part of which is a naked and deſolate plain.

rocks, without verdure or earth. To the ſouth of Antioch, and on the ſea-coaſt, the hill-ſides are proper for the cultivation of tobacco, olives, and vines *(g)*; but, on the ſide of the deſert, the ſummits and declivities of this chain are almoſt one continued ſeries of white rocks. Towards Lebanon, the mountains are lofty, but are covered, in many places, with as much earth as fits them for cultivation by induſtry and labour. There, amid the crags of the rocks, may be ſeen the no very magnificent remains of the boaſted cedars *(b)*; but a much greater number of firs, oaks, brambles, mulberry-trees, figs, and vines. As we leave the country of the Druzes, the mountains are no longer ſo high, nor ſo rugged, but become fitter for tillage. They riſe again to the ſouth-eaſt of Mount Carmel, are covered with woods, and afford very pleaſant proſ-

(g) Mount Caſius muſt be excepted, which riſes above Antioch to a prodigious height. But Pliny ſurpaſſes hyperbole, when he ſays that, from its ſummit, we may diſcover at once both the morning's dawn and the evening twilight.

(b) There are now but four or five of theſe trees which deſerve any notice.

pects; but as we advance toward Judea, they loſe their verdure, their valleys grow narrower, they become dry and ſtoney, and terminate at the Dead Sea in a pile of deſolate rocks, full of precipices and caverns *(i)*; while to the weſt of Jordan and the lake, another chain of rocks, ſtill higher, and more rugged, preſents a ſtill more gloomy proſpect, and announces, afar off, the entrance of the deſert, and the end of the habitable lands.

A view of the country will convince us that the moſt elevated point of all Syria is Lebanon, on the ſouth-eaſt of Tripoli. Scarcely do we depart from Larneca, in Cyprus, which is thirty leagues diſtance, before we diſcover its ſummit, capped with clouds. This is alſo diſtinctly perceivable on the map, from the courſe of the rivers. The Orontes, which flows from the mountains of Damaſcus, and loſes itſelf below Antioch; the Kaſmia, which, from the north of Balbec, takes its courſe towards Tyre; the Jordan,

(i) This is the place called the *Grottoes of Engaddi*, which have been a refuge for vagabonds in all ages. Some of them are capable of containing fifteen hundred men.

forced, by the declivities, toward the ſouth, prove that this is the higheſt point. Next to Lebanon, the moſt elevated part of the country is Mount Akkar, which becomes viſible as ſoon as we leave Marra in the deſert. It appears like an enormous flattened cone, and is conſtantly in view for two days journey. No one has yet had an opportunity to aſcertain the height of theſe mountains by the barometer; but we may deduce it from another conſideration. In winter their tops are entirely covered with ſnow, from Alexandretta to Jeruſalem; but after the month of March it melts, except on Mount Lebanon, where, however, it does not remain the whole year, unleſs in the higheſt cavities, and toward the north-eaſt, where it is ſheltered from the ſea winds, and the rays of the ſun. In ſuch a ſituation I ſaw it ſtill remaining, in 1784, at the very time I was almoſt ſuffocated with heat in the valley of Balbec. Now, ſince it is well known that ſnow, in this latitude, requires an elevation of fifteen or ſixteen hundred fathom, we may conclude that to be the height of Lebanon, and that it is conſequently much lower

lower than the Alps, or even the Pyrenees *(k)*.

Lebanon, which gives its name to the whole extenſive chain of the Keſraouan, and the country of the Druzes, preſents us every where with majeſtic mountains. At every ſtep we meet with ſcenes in which nature diſplays either beauty or grandeur, ſometimes ſingularity, but always variety. When we land on the coaſt, the loftineſs and ſteep aſcent of this mountainous ridge, which ſeems to encloſe the country, thoſe gigantic maſſes which ſhoot into the clouds, inſpire aſtoniſhment and awe. Should the curious traveller then climb theſe ſummits which bounded his view, the wide extended ſpace which he diſcovers becomes a freſh ſubject of admiration; but completely to enjoy this majeſtic ſcene, he muſt aſcend the very point of Lebanon, or the *Sannin*. There, on every ſide, he will view an horizon without bounds; while, in clear weather, the ſight is loſt over the deſert, which extends to the Perſian

(k) Mount Blanc, the loftieſt of the Alps, is eſtimated at two thouſand four hundred fathom above the level of the ſea; and the peak of Oſſian, in the Pyrenees, at nineteen hundred.

Gulph, and over the ſea which bathes the coaſts of Europe. He ſeems to command the whole world, while the wandering eye, now ſurveying the ſucceſſive chains of mountains, tranſports the imagination in an inſtant from Antioch to Jeruſalem; and now approaching the ſurrounding objects, obſerves the diſtant profundity of the coaſt, till the attention, at length, fixed by diſtincter objects, more minutely examines the rocks, woods, torrents, hill-ſides, villages, and towns; and the mind ſecretly exults at the diminution of things, which before appeared ſo great. He contemplates the valley obſcured by ſtormy clouds, with a novel delight, and ſmiles at hearing the thunder, which had ſo often burſt over his head, growling under his feet; while the threatening ſummits of the mountains are diminiſhed till they appear only like the furrows of a ploughed field, or the ſteps of an amphitheatre; and he feels himſelf flattered by an elevation above ſo many great objects, on which pride makes him look down with a ſecret ſatisfaction.

When the traveller viſits the interior parts of theſe mountains, the ruggedneſs of the roads,

roads, the ſteepneſs of the deſcents, the height of the precipices ſtrike him at firſt with terror; but the ſagacity of his mule ſoon relieves him, and he examines at his eaſe thoſe pictureſque ſcenes which ſucceed each other to entertain him. There, as in the Alps, he travels whole days, to reach a place which was in ſight at his departure; he winds, he deſcends, he ſkirts the hills, he climbs; and in this perpetual change of poſition it ſeems as if ſome magic power varied for him at every ſtep the decorations of the ſcenery. Sometimes he ſees villages ready to glide from the ſteep declivities on which they are built, and ſo diſpoſed that the terraces of one row of houſes ſerve as a ſtreet to the row above them. Sometimes he ſees a convent ſtanding on a ſolitary eminence, like Mar-Shaya, in the valley of the Tigris. Here is a rock perforated by a torrent, and become a natural arch, like that of Nahr-el-Leben *(l)*. There another rock, worn perpendicular, reſembles a lofty wall. Frequent-

(l) The river of milk, which falls into Nahr-el-Salib, called alſo the river of Bairout; this arch is upwards of one hundred and ſixty feet long, eighty-five wide, and near two hundred high above the torrent.

ly

ly on the ſides of hills he ſees beds of ſtones ſtripped and detached by the waters, riſing up like artificial ruins. In many places, the waters, meeting with inclined beds, have undermined the intermediate earth, and formed caverns, as at Nahr-el-kelb, near Antoura: in others are formed ſubterranean channels, through which flow rivulets for a part of the year, as at Mar-Elias-el-Roum, and Mar-Hanna *(m)*; but theſe

(m) Theſe ſubterraneous rivulets are common throughout Syria; there are ſome near Damaſcus, at the ſources of the Orontes, and at thoſe of Jordan. That of Mar-Hanna, a Greek convent, near the village of Shouair, opens by a gulph called *El-baloua*, or the Swallower. It is an aperture of about ten feet wide, ſituated in the middle of a hollow: at the depth of fifteen feet is a ſort of firſt bottom; but it only hides a very profound lateral opening. Some years ago it was ſhut, as it had ſerved to conceal a murder. The winter rains coming on, the waters collected, and formed a pretty deep lake; but ſome ſmall ſtreams penetrating among the ſtones, they were ſoon ſtripped of the earth which faſtened them, and the preſſure of the maſs of water prevailing, the whole obſtacle was removed with an exploſion like thunder; and the re-action of the compreſſed air was ſo violent, that a column of water ſpouted up, and fell upon a houſe at the diſtance of at leaſt two hundred paces. The current this occaſioned formed a whirlpool, which ſwallowed up the trees and vines planted in the hollow, and threw them out by the ſecond aperture.

picturesque situations sometimes become tragical. From thaws and earthquakes rocks have been known to lose their equilibrium, roll down upon the adjacent houses, and bury the inhabitants: such an accident happened about twenty years ago, and overwhelmed a whole village near Mar-djordjos, without leaving a single trace to discover where it formerly stood. Still more lately, and near the same spot, a whole hill side, covered with mulberries and vines, was detached by a sudden thaw, and sliding down the declivity of the rock, was launched altogether, like a ship from the stocks, into the valley. Hence arose a whimsical, but reasonable, litigation, between the proprietor of the original ground and the owner of the emigrated land; the cause was carried before the tribunal of the Emir Yousef, who indemnified both parties for their mutual losses. It might be expected such accidents would disgust the inhabitants of those mountains; but besides that they are rare, they are compensated by an advantage which makes them prefer their habitations to the most fertile plains, I mean the security they enjoy from the oppressions of the Turks. This security is esteemed

eſteemed ſo valuable a bleſſing by the inhabitants, that they have diſplayed an induſtry on theſe rocks which we may elſewhere look for in vain. By dint of art and labour they have compelled a rocky ſoil to become fertile. Sometimes, to profit by the water, they conduct it by a thouſand windings along the declivities, or ſtop it by forming dams in the valleys, while in other places, they prop up ground, ready to crumble away, by walls and terraces. Almoſt all theſe mountains, thus laboured, preſent the appearance of a flight of ſtairs, or an amphitheatre, each ſtep of which is a row of vines or mulberry-trees. I have reckoned from a hundred to a hundred and twenty of theſe gradations on the ſame declivity, from the bottom of the valley to the top of the eminence. While amid theſe mountains, I forgot it was in Turkey, or, if I recollected it, only felt more ſenſibly the powerful influence of even the feebleſt ray of liberty.

SECT. III.

Structure of the Mountains.

If we examine the ſubſtance of theſe mountains, we ſhall find they conſiſt of a hard calcareous ſtone, of a whitiſh colour, ſonorous like free-ſtone, and diſpoſed in ſtrata variouſly inclined. This ſtone has almoſt the ſame appearance in every part of Syria; ſometimes it is bare, and looks like the peeled rocks on the coaſt of Provence: ſuch, for inſtance, is that of the chain of hills on the north ſide of the road from Antioch to Aleppo, and that which ſerves as a bed to the upper part of the rivulet which paſſes by the latter city. Near Ermenaz, a village ſituated between Serkin and Kaftin, is a defile where the rocks exactly reſemble thoſe we paſs in going from Marſeilles to Toulon. In travelling from Aleppo to Hama, veins of the ſame rock are continually to be met with in the plain, while the mountains on the right preſent huge piles, which look like the ruins of towns and caſtles. The ſame ſtone, under a more regular form, likewiſe compoſes

poſes the greater part of Lebanon, Anti-Lebanon, the mountains of the Druzes, Galilee, and Mount Carmel, and ſtretches to the ſouth of the Lake Aſphaltites. The inhabitants every where build their houſes, and make lime with it. I have never ſeen, nor heard it ſaid, that theſe ſtones contained any petrified ſhells in the upper regions of Lebanon; but we find, between Batroun and Djebail, in the Keſraouan, at a little diſtance from the ſea, a quarry of ſchiſtous ſtones, the flakes of which bear the impreſſions of plants, fiſh, ſhells, and eſpecially the ſea onion. The bed of the torrent of Azkalan, in Paleſtine, is alſo lined with a heavy ſtone, porous and ſalt, which contains a great number of ſmall volutes and bivalves of the Mediterranean. Pocock found a large quantity of them in the rocks which border on the Dead Sea. Iron is the only mineral which abounds here; the mountains of the Keſraouan, and of the Druzes, are full of it. Every ſummer the inhabitants work thoſe mines, which are ſimply ochreous. Judea cannot be without it, ſince Moſes obſerved, above three thouſand years ago, that its ſtones were of iron. There is a vague report, that there was anciently

ciently a copper mine near Aleppo, but it muſt have been long ſince abandoned: I have been told likewiſe among the Druzes, that in the declivity of the hill I have mentioned, a mineral was diſcovered which produced both lead and ſilver; but as ſuch a diſcovery would have ruined the whole diſtrict, by attracting the attention of the Turks, they made haſte to deſtroy every veſtige of it.

SECT. IV.

Volcanos and Earthquakes.

The ſouth of Syria, that is, the hollow through which the Jordan flows, is a country of volcanos; the bituminous and ſulphureous ſources of the Lake Aſphaltites, the lava, the pumice-ſtones thrown upon its banks, and the hot bath of Tabaria, demonſtrate that this valley has been the ſeat of a ſubterraneous fire which is not yet extinguiſhed. Clouds of ſmoke are often obſerved to iſſue from the lake, and new crevices to be formed upon its banks. If conjectures in ſuch caſes were not too liable to error, we might ſuſ-

pect that the whole valley has been formed only by a violent ſinking of a country which formerly poured the Jordan into the Mediterranean. It appears certain, at leaſt, that the cataſtrophe of five cities, deſtroyed by fire, muſt have been occaſioned by the eruption of a volcano, then burning. Strabo expreſsly ſays *(n)*, "that the tradi-"tion of the inhabitants of the country, "(that is, of the Jews themſelves), was, "that formerly the valley of the lake was "peopled by thirteen flouriſhing cities, "and that they were ſwallowed up by a "volcano." This account ſeems to be confirmed by the quantities of ruins ſtill found by travellers on the weſtern border. Theſe eruptions have ceaſed long ſince, but earthquakes, which uſually ſucceed them, ſtill continue to be felt at intervals in this country. The coaſt in general is ſubject to them, and hiſtory gives us many examples of earthquakes, which have changed the face of Antioch, Laodicea, Tripoli, Berytus, Tyre, Sidon, &c. In our time, in the year 1759, there happened one which cauſed the greateſt

(n) Lib. 16, p. 764.

ravages.

ravages. It is ſaid to have deſtroyed, in the valley of Balbec, upwards of twenty thouſand perſons, a loſs which has never been repaired. For three months, the ſhocks of it terrified the inhabitants of Lebanon ſo much as to make them abandon their houſes, and dwell under tents. Very lately (the 14th of December, 1783,) when I was at Aleppo, ſo violent a ſhock was felt, as to ring the bell in the houſe of the French conſul. It is remarked in Syria, that earthquakes ſeldom happen but in winter, after the autumnal rains; and this obſervation, conformable to that made by Doctor Shaw in Barbary, ſeems to prove that the action of water on the dried earth has ſome ſhare in theſe convulſive motions. It may not be improper to remark, that the whole of Aſia Minor is ſubject to them in like manner.

SECT. V.

Of the Locuſts.

Syria, as well as Egypt, Perſia, and almoſt all the ſouth of Aſia, is ſubject to

another calamity no leſs dreadful, I mean thoſe clouds of locuſts, ſo often mentioned by travellers. The quantity of theſe inſects is incredible to all who have not themſelves witneſſed their aſtoniſhing numbers; the whole earth is covered with them for the ſpace of ſeveral leagues. The noiſe they make in browzing on the trees and herbage, may be heard at a great diſtance, and reſembles that of an army foraging in ſecret. The Tartars themſelves are a leſs deſtructive enemy than theſe little animals; one would imagine, that fire had followed their progreſs. Wherever their myriads ſpread, the verdure of the country diſappears, as if a covering had been removed; trees and plants, ſtripped of their leaves, and reduced to their naked boughs and ſtems, cauſe the dreary image of winter to ſucceed in an inſtant, to the rich ſcenery of the ſpring. When theſe clouds of locuſts take their flight, to ſurmount any obſtacle, or to traverſe more rapidly a deſert ſoil, the heavens may literally be ſaid to be obſcured by them. Happily this calamity is not frequently repeated, for it is the inevitable forerunner of famine, and the maladies it occaſions. The inhabitants of Syria have remarked, that

locuſts are always bred by too mild winters, and that they conſtantly come from the deſert of Arabia. From this obſervation, it is eaſy to conceive that, the cold not having been rigorous enough to deſtroy their eggs, they multiply ſuddenly, and, the herbage failing them in the immenſe plains of the deſert, innumerable legions iſſue forth. When they make their firſt appearance on the frontiers of the cultivated country, the inhabitants ſtrive to drive them off, by raiſing large clouds of ſmoke, but frequently their herbs and wet ſtraw fail them; they then dig trenches, where numbers of them are buried; but the two moſt efficacious deſtroyers of theſe inſects, are the ſouth or ſouth-eaſterly winds, and the bird called the *ſamarmar*. Theſe birds, which greatly reſemble the woodpecker, follow them in large flocks, and not only greedily devour them, but kill as many as they can; they are therefore much reſpected by the peaſants, and nobody is ever allowed to ſhoot them. As for the ſoutherly and ſouth-eaſterly winds, they drive with violence theſe clouds of locuſts over the Mediterranean, where ſuch quantities of them are drowned that, when

their carcaſes are thrown on the ſhore, they infect the air for ſeveral days, even to a great diſtance.

We may reaſonably preſume, that in ſo extenſive a country as Syria, the quality of the ſoil is not every where the ſame. In general the land of the mountains is harſh and ſtoney; while that of the plains is fat and loamy, and exhibits every ſign of the greateſt fecundity. In the territory of Aleppo, towards Antioch, it reſembles very fine brick-duſt, or ſpaniſh ſnuff. The waters of the Orontes, however, which traverſes this diſtrict, are of a whitiſh colour, which is occaſioned by the nature of the lands towards its ſource. Almoſt every where elſe the earth is brown, and as fine as garden mold. In the plains, ſuch as thoſe of Hauran, Gaza, and Balbec, it is often difficult even to find a pebble. The winter rains occaſion deep quagmires, and on the return of ſummer, the heat produces, as in Egypt, large cracks in the earth ſeveral feet deep.

SECT. VI.

Of the Rivers and Lakes.

The extravagant, or, if you will, the grand ideas which hiſtory and travellers uſually give us of diſtant objects, have accuſtomed us to ſpeak of the waters of Syria with a reſpect which amuſes our imagination. We are fond of ſaying the *river Jordan*, the *river Orontes*, the *river Adonis*. If, however, we wiſh to preſerve to words their proper ſignification, we ſhall hardly find in this country any other than *rivulets*. The channels of the Orontes and the Jordan, the two moſt conſiderable, are ſcarcely ſixty paces wide at their mouths *(o)*; the others do not merit to be mentioned. If the rains and melted ſnow give them ſome importance in winter, their courſe is only to be diſcovered, during the remainder of the year, by the round ſtones and fragments of rocks with which their

(o) The Jordan, it muſt be owned, has conſiderable depth, but if the Orontes were not impeded by ſucceſſive obſtacles, it would be quite dry during the ſummer.

beds are filled. They are nothing but torrents and caſcades; and it may be conceived that, from the proximity of the mountains, among which they riſe, to the ſea, their waters have not time to collect in long valleys, ſo as to form rivers. The obſtacles oppoſed by theſe mountains, in ſeveral places, at their iſſue, have formed conſiderable lakes, ſuch as thoſe of Antioch, Aleppo, Damaſcus, Houla, Tabaria, and that which is honoured with the name of the Dead Sea, or Lake Aſphaltites. All theſe lakes, except the laſt, are of freſh water, and contain ſeveral ſpecies of fiſh, different from *(p)* thoſe we are acquainted with.

Lake Aſphaltites, alone, contains neither animal nor vegetable life. We ſee no verdure on its banks, nor are fiſh to be found within its waters; but it is not true that its exhalations are peſtiferous, ſo as to deſtroy birds flying over it. It is very common to

(p) The lake of Antioch abounds particularly with eels, and a ſort of red fiſh of an indifferent quality. The Greeks, who keep a perpetual Lent, conſume great quantities of them. Lake Tabaria is ſtill richer; crabs, eſpecially, are very numerous, but, as its environs are inhabited only by Mahometans, it is but little fiſhed.

ſee

ſee ſwallows ſkimming its ſurface, and dipping for the water neceſſary to build their neſts. The real cauſe which deprives it of vegetables and animals is the extreme ſaltneſs of the water, which is infinitely ſtronger than that of the ſea. The ſoil around it, equally impregnated with this ſalt, produces no plants, and the air itſelf, which becomes loaded with it from evaporation, and which receives alſo the ſulphureous and bituminous vapours, cannot be favourable to vegetation: hence the deadly aſpect which reigns around this lake. The ground about it, however, is not marſhy, and its waters are limpid and incorruptible, as muſt be the caſe with a diſſolution of ſalt. The origin of this mineral is eaſy to be diſcovered; for on the ſouth-weſt ſhore, are mines of foſſil ſalt, of which I have brought away ſeveral ſpecimens. They are ſituated in the ſide of the mountains which extend along that border, and, for time immemorial, have ſupplied the neighbouring Arabs, and even the city of Jeruſalem. We find alſo on this ſhore fragments of ſulphur and bitumen, which the Arabs convert into a trifling article of commerce; as alſo hot fountains, and deep

crevices, which are diſcovered at a diſtance, by little pyramids built on the brink of them. We likewiſe find a ſort of ſtone, which, on rubbing, emits a noxious ſmell, burns like bitumen, receives a poliſh like white alabaſter, and is uſed for the paving of court-yards. At intervals, we alſo meet with unſhapen blocks, which prejudiced eyes miſtake for mutilated ſtatues, and which paſs with ignorant and ſuperſtitious pilgrims, for monuments of the adventure of *Lot's Wife*, though it is no where ſaid ſhe was metamorphoſed into ſtone, like Niobe, but into ſalt, which muſt have melted the enſuing winter.

Some naturaliſts have been greatly embarraſſed to find a diſcharge for the waters which the Jordan is continually pouring into the lake, and have therefore been inclined to ſuſpect it had a communication with the Mediterranean; but, beſides that we know of no gulph to corroborate this ſuppoſition, it has been demonſtrated, by accurate calculations, that evaporation is more than ſufficient to carry off the waters brought by the river. It is, in fact, very conſiderable, and frequently becomes ſenſible

ſible to the eye, by the fogs with which the lake is covered, at the riſing of the ſun, and which are afterwards diſperſed by the heat.

SECT. VII.

Of the Climate.

It is an opinion pretty generally received, that Syria is a very hot country; but it will be neceſſary to make ſeveral diſtinctions: firſt, on account of the difference of latitude, which from one extremity to the other, is not leſs than ſix degrees: ſecondly, from the natural diviſion of the country into low and flat, and high and mountainous, which diviſion occaſions a ſtill more ſenſible difference; for while Reaumur's thermometer ſtands at twenty-five and twenty-ſix degrees upon the coaſt, it hardly riſes to twenty or twenty-one among the mountains *(q)*. In

(q) Along the coaſt of Syria, and at Tripoli, in particular, the loweſt degrees to which the thermometer falls in winter, are eight and nine degrees above the freezing point; (50 and 52 of *Fahrenheit's*) in ſummer, in cloſe apartments, it riſes from $25\frac{1}{2}$ to 26° (88 to 90). As for the barometer, it is remarkable that at the latter end of May, it fixes at 28 inches, and never varies till October.

winter,

winter, therefore, the whole chain of mountains is covered with ſnow, while the lower country is always free from it, or at leaſt it lies only for an inſtant. We muſt firſt then eſtabliſh two general climates; the one very hot, which is that of the coaſt, and the interior plains, ſuch as thoſe of Balbec, Antioch, Tripoli, Acre, Gaza, Hauran, &c. the other temperate, and almoſt like our own, which is the climate of the mountains, at leaſt at a certain height. The ſummer of 1784 was reckoned, among the Druzes, one of the hotteſt they remembered, yet I never found the heat to be compared to that I had felt at Saide or Bairout.

In this climate, the order of the ſeaſons is nearly the ſame as in the middle provinces of France; the winter, which laſts from November to March, is ſharp and rigorous. Not a year paſſes without ſnow, and the earth is frequently covered ſeveral feet deep with it for months together; the ſpring and autumn are mild, and the ſummer heat is abſolutely inſupportable. In the plains, on the contrary, as ſoon as the ſun returns to the equator, the tranſition is rapid to oppreſſive heats, which continue to the end of October. But then the

the winter is ſo moderate, that the orange, date, banana, and other delicate trees, flouriſh in the open air; and it appears equally extraordinary and pictureſque to an European at Tripoli, to behold, under his windows, in the month of January, orange-trees loaded with flowers and fruit, while the lofty head of Lebanon is ſeen covered with ice and ſnow. It muſt nevertheleſs be obſerved that, in the northern parts, and to the eaſt of the mountains, the winter is more rigorous, without the ſummer being leſs hot. At Antioch, Aleppo, and Damaſcus, there are ſeveral weeks of froſt and ſnow every winter; which ariſes from the ſituation of the country ſtill more than the difference of latitude. For, in fact, all the plain to the eaſt of the mountains is very high above the level of the ſea, expoſed to all the parching blaſts of the north and north-eaſt, and ſcreened from the humid winds of the ſouth and ſouth-weſt. Beſides, Antioch and Aleppo receive from the mountains of Alexandretta, which are within ſight, an air which the ſnow, that covers them ſo long, muſt neceſſarily render very ſharp.

Syria,

Syria, therefore, unites different climates under the ſame ſky, and collects, within a narrow compaſs, pleaſures and productions which nature has elſewhere diſperſed at great diſtances of times and places. With us, for inſtance, ſeaſons are ſeparated by months; there we may ſay they are only ſeparated by hours. If in Saide or Tripoli, we are incommoded by the heats of July, in ſix hours we are in the neighbouring mountains, in the temperature of March; or, on the other hand, if chilled by the froſts of December, at Beſharrai, a day's journey brings us back to the coaſt, amid the flowers of May *(r)*. The Arabian poets have therefore ſaid, that "the "Sannin bears winter on his head, ſpring "upon his ſhoulders, and autumn in his "boſom, while ſummer lies ſleeping at his "feet." I have myſelf experienced the truth of this figurative obſervation, during the eight months I reſided at the monaſtery of Mar-Hanna *(s)*, ſeven leagues from Bairout. At the

(r) This is the practice of ſeveral of the inhabitants of this diſtrict, who paſs the winter near Tripoli, while their houſes are buried under the ſnow.

(s) Mar-Hanna el Shouair; i. e. St. John, near the village of Shouair. This monaſtery is ſituated in a ſtoney valley,

the end of February, I left at Tripoli a variety of vegetables which were in perfection, and many flowers in full bloom. On my arrival at Antoura *(t)*, I found the plants only beginning to ſhoot; and, at Mar-Hanna, every thing was covered with ſnow. It had not entirely left the Sannin till the end of April, and, already, in the valley it overlooks, roſes had begun to bud. The early figs were paſt at Bairout, when they were firſt gathered with us, and the ſilk-worms were in cod, before our mulberry-trees were half ſtripped.

To this advantage, which perpetuates enjoyments by their ſucceſſion, Syria adds another, that of multiplying them by the variety of her productions. Were nature aſſiſted by art, thoſe of the moſt diſtant countries might be produced within the ſpace of twenty leagues. At preſent, in ſpite of the barbariſm of a government which is an enemy to all induſtry and improvement, we are aſto-

valley, which joins to that of *Nahr el Kelb*, or Torrent of the Dog. The religious are Greek Catholics, of the order of Saint Baſil: I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak of it more amply.

(t) A houſe formerly belonging to the Jeſuits, but occupied at preſent by the Lazariſts.

niſhed

niſhed at the variety this province affords. Beſides wheat, rye, barley, beans, and the cotton plant, which is cultivated every where, we find a multitude of uſeful and agreeable productions, appropriated to different ſituations. Paleſtine abounds in ſeſamum, from which oil is procured, and doura *(u)* as good as that of Egypt *(x)*. Maize thrives in the light ſoil of Balbec, and even rice is cultivated, with ſucceſs, on the borders of the marſhy country of Havula. They have lately begun to plant ſugar-canes in the gardens of Saide and of Bairout, and they find them equal thoſe of the Delta. Indigo grows without cultivating, on the banks of the Jordan, in the country of Biſan, and only requires care to make it of an excellent quality. The hill-ſides of Latakia produce tobacco, which is the principal article of the commerce of that town with Damietta and Cairo. This is now cultivated throughout all the mountains. As for trees, the olive-tree of

(u) A ſort of pulſe, ſomething like lentils, which grows in cluſters, on a ſtalk ſix or ſeven feet high. It is the *holcus arundinaceus* of Linnæus.

(x) I never ſaw any buck-wheat in Syria, and oats are very rare. They feed their horſes with nothing but rye and chaff.

Provence

Provence grows at Antioch, and at Ramla, to the height of the beech. The white mulberry tree conſtitutes the wealth of the whole country of the Druzes, by the beautiful ſilks which are produced on it, while the vine, ſupported on poles, or winding round the oaks, ſupplies grapes which afford red and white wines that might rival thoſe of Bordeaux. Before the ravages occaſioned by the late troubles, there were, in the gardens of Yaffa, two plants of the Indian cotton-tree, which grew rapidly, nor has this town loſt its lemons, its enormous citrons *(y)*, or its water-melons, which are preferable even to thoſe of Broulos *(z)*. Gaza produces dates like Mecca, and pomegranates like Algiers; Tripoli affords oranges equal to thoſe of Malta; Bairout figs like thoſe of Marſeilles, and bananas not inferior to thoſe of St. Domingo; Aleppo enjoys the excluſive advantage of producing piſtachios; and Damaſcus juſtly boaſts of poſſeſſing all the fruits known in our provinces. Its ſtoney ſoil ſuits equally the ap-

(y) I have ſeen ſome which weighed eighteen pounds.

(z) Broulos on the coaſt of Egypt, produces better water-melons than are found in the reſt of the Delta, where the fruits in general are too watery.

ples

ples of Normandy, the plumbs of Touraine, and the peaches of Paris. Twenty ſorts of apricots are reckoned there, the ſtone of one of which contains a kernel highly valued through all Turkey. In ſhort, the cochineal plant, which grows on all that coaſt, contains, perhaps, that precious inſect in as high perfection as it is found in Mexico and St. Domingo *(a)*; and if we conſider that the mountains of the Yemen, which produce ſuch excellent coffee, are only a continuation of thoſe of Syria, and that their ſoil and climate are almoſt the ſame *(b)*, we ſhall be induced to believe that Judea, eſpecially, might eaſily cultivate this valuable production of Arabia.

With theſe numerous advantages of climate and of ſoil, it is not aſtoniſhing that Syria ſhould

(a) It was long imagined that the inſect of the cochineal was peculiar to Mexico; and the Spaniards, to ſecure the excluſive poſſeſſion of it, have prohibited the exportation of the living cochineal, under pain of death; but M. Thierri, who ſucceeded in bringing it away, in 1771, and carried it to Saint Domingo, found the nopals of that iſland contained it before his arrival. It ſeems as if nature ſcarcely ever ſeparated inſects from the plants appropriated to them.

(b) The ſituation of the country of Yemen and Tahama is very ſimilar to that of Syria. See M. Niebuhr *Voyage en Arabie.*

always have been eſteemed a moſt delicious country, and that the Greeks and Romans ranked it among the moſt beautiful of their provinces, and even thought it not inferior to Egypt. In more modern times, alſo, a Pacha, who was acquainted with both theſe provinces, being aſked to which he gave the preference, replied, "Egypt, without doubt, "is a moſt beautiful farm, but Syria is a "charming country-houſe" *(c)*.

SECT.

(c) To complete the Natural Hiſtory of Syria, it is proper to add that it produces all our domeſtic animals, and, beſides them, the buffalo and the camel, whoſe utility is ſo well known. We alſo find gazelles (antelopes) in the plains, which ſupply the place of our roebucks; in the mountains are numbers of wild-boars, not ſo large nor ſo fierce as ours. The ſtag and the deer are unknown there; the wolf and the real fox are very rare; but there is a prodigious quantity of the middle ſpecies, named *Shacal* (jackall) which in Syria is called *wauwee*, in imitation of its howl; and in Egypt *dib*, or wolf. Theſe jackalls go in droves, and frequent the environs of the towns, where they feed on what carrion they can find. They never attack any body, but are always ready to ſave themſelves by flight. Every evening they ſeem to give each other the watch-word, to begin howling, and their cries, which are very doleful, ſometimes, laſt a quarter of an hour. In unfrequented places there are alſo hyenas, in Arabic named *daba*, and ounces, im-

SECT. VIII.

Qualities of the Air.

I muſt not forget to ſpeak of the qualities of the air and waters. Theſe elements preſent in Syria very remarkable phænomena. On the mountains, and in all the elevated plain which ſtretches to the eaſtward, the air is light, pure and dry; while on the coaſt, and eſpecially from Alexandretta to Yafa, it is

properly called tygers (in Arabic *nema*). Lebanon, the country of the Druzes, Nablous, Mount Carmel, and the environs of Alexandretta, are their principal haunts. But, in return, the country is free from lions and bears. Water fowl are very plentiful; land game is not ſo abundant, except in particular diſtricts. The hare and the large red partridge are the moſt common; rabbits, if there are any, are extremely ſcarce. The francolin, or attagen, is more numerous at Tripoli, and in the neighbourhood of Yafa. Nor ought we to omit obſerving that a ſpecies of the colibri (or humming-bird) ſtill exiſts in the territory of Saide. M. J. B. Adanſon, formerly interpreter in that city, who cultivates natural hiſtory with equal taſte and ſucceſs, met with one, which he made a preſent of to his brother the Academician. This, and the pelican are the only remarkable birds in Syria.

moiſt and heavy; thus Syria is divided lengthways into two different diſtricts, ſeparated by the chain of mountains which alſo cauſe their diverſity; for theſe preventing, by their height, the free paſſage of the weſterly winds, force the vapours which they bring from the ſea to collect in the valleys; and as air is light only in proportion to its purity, theſe are unable to riſe above the ſummits of this rampart. The conſequence is, that the air of the deſert and the mountains, though ſufficiently wholeſome for ſuch as are in no danger of pulmonary complaints, is hurtful to thoſe who are, and it is neceſſary to ſend ſuch from Aleppo to Latakia or Saide. This good property of the air on the coaſt is, however, outweighed by more ſerious bad ones, and it may in general be pronounced unhealthy, as it cauſes intermittent and putrid fevers, and thoſe defluxions of the eyes, of which I have ſpoken in treating of Egypt. The evening dews, and ſleeping on the terraces, are found much leſs hurtful in the mountainous and interior parts of the country, as the diſtance from the ſea is greater, which confirms what I have already obſerved upon that ſubject.

SECT. IX.

Qualities of the Waters.

The waters of this country have alſo a remarkable difference. In the mountains, that of the ſprings is light, and of a very good quality; but in the plain, both to the eaſt and weſt, if it has no natural or artificial communication with the ſprings, we find nothing but brackiſh water, which becomes ſtill more ſo the nearer we approach the deſert, where there is not a drop of any other. This inconvenience has rendered rain ſo precious to the inhabitants of the frontiers, that they have in all ages taken care to collect it in wells and caverns carefully cloſed: hence, among all ruins, ciſterns are the firſt things we diſcover.

The face of the heavens, in Syria, particularly on the coaſt, and in the deſert, is in general more conſtant and regular than in our climates; rarely is the ſun obſcured for two ſucceſſive days. In the courſe of a whole ſummer we ſee few clouds, and ſtill leſs rain; which only begins about the end of October,

October, and then is neither long nor plentiful. The husbandmen wish for it to sow what they call their *winter* crop, that is, their wheat and barley *(d)*. In December and January, the rain becomes more frequent and heavier, and snow often falls in the higher country. It sometimes rains also in March and April; and the husbandman avails himself of it to sow his *summer* crop of sesamum, doura, tobacco, cotton, beans, and water-melons. The remainder of the year is uniform, and drought is more frequently complained of than too much wet.

(d) The seed-time of the winter crop, called *Shetawia*, takes place, throughout Syria, only at the time of the autumnal rains, or toward the end of October. The time of reaping this crop varies according to the difference of situation. In Palestine, and in the Hauran, they reap their wheat and barley from the end of April through the whole month of May. But as we advance toward the north, or ascend the mountains, the harvest does not begin till June and July.

The seed-time of the summer crop, or *Saifia*, begins with the spring rains, that is, in March and April; and their harvest is in the months of September and October.

The time of vintage, in the mountains, is about the end of September; the silk-worms hatch there in April and May, and begin to spin in July.

SECT. X.

Of the Winds.

The winds in Syria, as in Egypt, are in ſome degree periodical, and governed by the ſeaſons. About the autumnal equinox the north-weſt wind begins to blow more frequently and ſtronger. It renders the air dry, clear, and ſharp; and it is remarkable that, on the ſea-coaſt, it cauſes the head-ach, like the north-eaſt wind in Egypt; and this more in the northern than in the ſouthern parts, but never in the mountains. We may further remark, that it uſually blows three days ſucceſſively, like the ſouth and ſouth-eaſt at the other equinox. It continues to prevail till November, that is, about fifty days, and its variations are generally toward the eaſt. Theſe winds are followed by the north-weſt, the weſt, and ſouth-weſt, which prevail from November to February. The two latter are, to uſe the expreſſion of the Arabs, *the fathers of the rains*. In March ariſe the pernicious winds from the ſouthern quarter, with the ſame circumſtances as in Egypt;

Egypt; but they become feebler as we advance toward the north, and are much more ſupportable in the mountains than in the flat country. Their duration, at each return, is uſually of four-and-twenty hours, or three days. The eaſterly winds, which follow, continue till June, when a north wind ſucceeds, with which veſſels may go and return along all the coaſt. At the ſame ſeaſon too, the wind varies through all the points, every day, paſſing with the ſun from the eaſt to the ſouth, and from the ſouth to the weſt, to return by the north, and recommence the ſame circuit. At this time alſo a local wind, called the land-breeze, prevails along the coaſt, during the night; it ſprings up after ſun-ſet, laſts till ſun-riſing, and reaches only two or three leagues out at ſea.

The cauſes of all theſe phænomena are problems well deſerving the attention of natural philoſophers. No country is better adapted to obſervations of this kind than Syria. It ſeems as if nature had there prepared whatever is neceſſary to the ſtudy of her operations. We, in our foggy climates, in the depth of vaſt continents, are unable to purſue the great changes which happen in

the atmoſphere: the confined horizon which bounds our view, circumſcribes alſo our ideas. The field of our obſervation is very limited; and a thouſand circumſtances combine to vary the effects of natural cauſes. There, on the contrary, an immenſe ſcene opens before us, and the great agents of nature are collected in a ſpace which renders it eaſy to watch their various operations. To the weſt is the vaſt liquid plain of the Mediterranean; to the eaſt the plain of the deſert, no leſs vaſt, but abſolutely dry; in the midſt of theſe two level ſurfaces, riſe the mountains, whoſe ſummits are ſo many obſervatories, from whence the ſight may diſcern full thirty leagues. Four obſervers might command the whole extent of Syria; and from the tops of Caſius, Lebanon, and Tabor, let nothing eſcape them within that boundleſs horizon. They might obſerve how the region of the ſea, at firſt unclouded, veils itſelf with vapours; in what manner theſe vapours form into groupes, and ſeparate, and by a conſtant mechaniſm, aſcend and riſe above the mountains; while, on the other hand, the deſert, invariably clear, never produces clouds, and has only thoſe it has

received from the ſea. They might reply to the queſtion of M. Michaelis *(e)*, "Whether the deſert produces dews?" that the deſert, containing no water, except in winter, after the rains, can only furniſh vapours at that period. On reviewing the valley of Balbec, burnt up with heat, whilſt the head of Lebanon is hoary with ice and ſnow, they would be ſenſible of the truth of an axiom, which ought no longer to be diſputed, *that the heat is greater in proportion as we approach the ſurface of the earth, and diminiſhes as we remove from it*; ſo that it ſeems to proceed only from the action of the rays of the ſun upon the earth. In ſhort, they might ſucceſsfully attempt the ſolution of the greateſt part of meteorological problems.

(e) See the *Queſtions* propoſed by M. Michaelis to the travellers for the king of Denmark.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

Obſervations on the Winds, Clouds, Rains, Fogs, and Thunder.

UNTIL this ſhall be undertaken by perſons capable of making ſuch experiments, with all the accuracy ſo important a diſcuſſion merits, I ſhall ſubmit, in a few words, ſome general ideas ſuggeſted by my own obſervations. I have already mentioned the relation there is between the winds and the ſeaſons; and have hinted that the ſun, from the connection between his annual progreſs, and their varieties, appears to be the principal agent. His action on the atmoſphere which ſurrounds our globe, ſeems to be the primary cauſe of all the various motions in the upper regions of the air. To conceive clearly how this is effected, we muſt trace back theſe ideas to their origin, and conſider the properties of the element put in action.

Firſt, the air, we know, is a fluid, all the particles of which, naturally equal and move-

able,

able, tend, like water, invariably to a level; ſo that if we ſuppoſe a chamber ſix feet ſquare, every way, the air introduced into it will fill it equally. Secondly, another property of air is to be capable of dilatation or compreſſion; that is, the ſame quantity of it may occupy a greater or a leſs ſpace. Thus, in the caſe of the chamber, were we to draw off two thirds of the air it contains, the remainder would replace it by expanſion, and ſtill continue to fill its whole capacity; if inſtead of drawing off the air, the quantity of it be doubled or tripled, the chamber will equally contain it; which is not the caſe with water.

This property of expanſion is more eſpecially called into action by the preſence of fire; and as then the heated air contains in an equal ſpace fewer particles than cold air, it becomes lighter, and riſes. If, for example, in the ſuppoſed chamber, you introduce a grate full of fire, the air affected by it will riſe inſtantly to the ceiling, and that which was near it will take its place. When this air is heated it will follow the firſt, and a conſtant current upwards, ſupplied by the influx

influx of the lateral air, be produced *(f)*; ſo that the hotteſt air will diffuſe itſelf in the upper part of the room, and the leſs heated in the lower, each of them continuing to ſeek an equilibrium, agreeable to the general laws of fluidity *(g)*.

Let us now apply theſe obſervations to what paſſes in the elements, on a larger ſcale, and we ſhall find they explain the greater part of the phænomena of the winds.

The atmoſphere which ſurrounds the earth may be conſidered as an ocean formed by a peculiar fluid, the bottom of which we occupy, and whoſe ſurface is at an unknown height. From its primary law, that is, from its fluidity, this ocean has a conſtant tendency to an equilibrium, and to remain ſtagnant; but the ſun, calling into action the law of expanſion, excites an agitation in it which keeps all its parts in a ſtate of perpetual fluctuation. His rays, applied to the

(f) This is the mechaniſm of chimneys and ſtove-baths.

(g) There is beſides this a continual effort of the rarefied air againſt the obſtacles by which it is confined; but this is of no conſequence in the preſent caſe.

ſurface

ſurface of the earth, have preciſely the ſame effect as the fire in the ſuppoſed chamber; they produce a degree of heat which dilates the contiguous air, and cauſes it to riſe towards the upper region. Were this heat equal throughout, the general proceſs would be uniform; but it varies from an infinity of circumſtances, which become the efficient cauſes of the varieties we continually obſerve.

Firſt, it is certain that the earth is heated more or leſs in proportion as it is more or leſs expoſed to the perpendicular rays of the ſun. The heat is nothing at the poles, but exceſſive under the line. For this reaſon our climates are colder in winter and hotter in ſummer; and for the ſame reaſon, likewiſe, the temperature may be very different in the ſame place, and under the ſame latitude, according as the country, inclining towards the north or ſouth, preſents its ſurface more or leſs obliquely to the ſolar rays *(b)*.

(b) This is the reaſon why, as Monteſquieu has well obſerved, Tartary, which is under the ſame parallel as France and England, is infinitely colder than theſe countries.

Secondly,

Secondly, it is equally true that the ſurface of the water is leſs retentive of heat than that of the earth: the air over the ſea, lakes, and rivers, therefore, will be leſs hot than that over the land in the ſame latitude; humidity is every where a principle of coolneſs, and hence a country covered with foreſts, and abounding in moraſſes, is colder than when thoſe marſhy grounds are drained, and the foreſts felled *(i)*.

A third conſideration, not leſs important, is, that the heat diminiſhes as we riſe above the general plane of the earth. This is demonſtrated by the obſervation, that the ſummits of high mountains, even under the line, are covered with eternal ſnows, which proves the conſtant coldneſs of the upper region of the air.

If we now conſider the combined effects of theſe different circumſtances, we ſhall find they account for the greateſt part of the phænomena we are attempting to explain.

Firſt, the air of the polar regions being colder and more denſe than that of the coun-

(i) This explains why ancient Gaul was much colder than modern France.

tries

tries near the equinoctial, its endeavour to preſerve an equilibrium, inceſſantly forces it from the poles towards the equator. And this reaſoning is ſupported by facts, ſince the uniform obſervation of all navigators proves that the winds moſt common in both hemiſpheres proceed from that quarter of the horizon of which the pole occupies the center; that is to ſay, from between the north-weſt and north-eaſt. What is obſerved on the Mediterranean, in particular, is perfectly analogous to this remark.

I have remarked, in ſpeaking of Egypt, that the northerly winds are moſt frequent in that ſea, where they prevail nine months out of twelve. A very plauſible ſolution of this phenomenon may be given from the conſideration that, the coaſt of Barbary, ſtruck powerfully by the rays of the ſun, heats the ſurrounding air, the rarefaction of which cauſes it to riſe, and paſs into the interior part of the country, while that of the ſea, meeting with leſs reſiſtance on that ſide, immediately ruſhes into its place; but being itſelf heated, follows the former current, till, by degrees, the Mediterranean loſes a great quantity of air. By this proceſs, the air of Europe, having

having no longer any ſupport, diffuſes itſelf on that ſide; and thus a general current is eſtabliſhed. This will be the ſtronger, in proportion as the air of the north is colder; and hence the greater impetuoſity of the winds in winter than in ſummer; and it will be more feeble as the air of the different countries approaches nearer to an equilibrium; and hence theſe winds are more moderate in the fine ſeaſon, and in July and Auguſt terminate in a ſort of general calm, becauſe the ſun then heats almoſt equally the whole hemiſphere, even to the pole. The uniform and conſtant courſe that the north-weſt wind takes in June, is cauſed by the ſun, which, advancing as far as the parallel of Aſouan, which is almoſt that of the Canaries, occaſions, behind mount Atlas, a conſtant and regular wind. The periodical return of the eaſterly winds, at the time of each equinox, originates, no doubt, from a ſimilar cauſe; but, in order to diſcover this, it would be neceſſary to have a general table of what paſſes in other parts of the continent; and here, I confeſs, my ſyſtem ſeems to fail me. I am ignorant, likewiſe, of the reaſon of that conſtant duration

of

of *three days*, which we almoſt always obſerve in the ſoutherly and northerly winds, whenever they blow at the time of the equinoxes.

Varieties are ſometimes obſervable in the ſame wind, which ariſe from the nature of the country. Thus, if a wind meets with a valley, it follows that direction, like the currents of the ſea. And hence, doubtleſs, it happens, that in the Adriatic Gulph ſcarce any but north-weſt and ſouth-eaſterly winds are known; ſuch being the direction of this arm of the ſea. From a ſimilar cauſe, the wind in the Red-ſea blows conſtantly from the north or ſouth; and the frequency of the north-weſt, or *Miſtral*, in Provence, muſt ariſe from the currents of air, occaſioned by the Cevennes and the Alps, and which are forced to follow the direction of the valley of the Rhone.

But what becomes of the air thus attracted by the coaſt of Africa and the torrid zone? This may be diſpoſed of in two different ways.

Firſt, the air, arrived under theſe latitudes, forms there a great current, known by the name of the Eaſtern Trade-wind, that

extends, as is well known, from the Canaries to America *(k)*, which, when it has reached, it ſeems to be broken by the mountains of the continent: and thus diverted from its original direction, it returns in an oppoſite one, whence that weſterly wind which prevails under the parallel of Canada, and which, by this means, repairs the loſſes of the polar regions.

Secondly, The air which ruſhes from the Mediterranean upon Africa, rarefied there by the heat, riſes into the ſuperior region; but as it cools at a certain height, the ſpace it occupies is

(k) Dr. Franklin has thought, that the cauſe of the Eaſtern Trade-wind has a connection with the diurnal motion of the earth; but were it ſo, why is not this wind perpetual? Beſides, how ſhall we explain, on this hypotheſis, the two Monſoons of India, the ſhiftings of which conſtantly follow the paſſage of the ſun over the equinoctial line; that is, the weſterly and ſoutherly winds prevail during the ſix months the ſun is in the northern ſigns; and the eaſterly and northerly winds, during the ſix months he is in the ſouthern. Does not this prove, that all the varieties of the winds depend ſolely on the action of the ſun upon the atmoſphere? The moon too, which has ſo great an effect upon the ocean, may alſo produce ſome on the winds; but the influence of the other planets ſeems a chimæra ſuited only to the aſtrology of the ancients.

infinitely

infinitely reduced by condenſation. It may be alleged, that having recovered its weight, it ſhould deſcend; but beſides that, on returning towards the earth, it becomes again heated, and conſequently expands, it experiences a powerful and continued effort of the inferior air which ſupports it. Theſe two *ſtrata*, of the ſuperior air refrigerated, and the inferior air dilated, maintain a perpetual ſtruggle with each other. If the equilibrium be loſt, the ſuperior, obeying the law of gravity, may ruſh into the inferior region, even to the earth. To accidents of this nature we muſt aſcribe thoſe ſudden torrents of frozen air, known by the name of hurricanes and ſqualls, which ſeem to fall from heaven, and produce, in the warmeſt ſeaſons, and the hotteſt regions of the earth, the cold of the polar circles. If the ſurrounding air reſiſts, their duration is limited to a ſhort time; but when they fall in with currents already eſtabliſhed, they encreaſe their violence, and become tempeſts, which laſt ſeveral hours. Theſe tempeſts are dry when the air is pure; but when it is loaded with clouds, they are attended with a deluge of rain and hail, which the cold air conden-

ſes in its fall. It may alſo happen that a continued fall of water ſhall accompany the rupture, increaſed by the ſurrounding clouds, attracted to the ſame vortex; and hence will reſult thoſe columns of water, known by the name of *Typhons* and *water-ſpouts (l)*. Theſe water-ſpouts are not unuſual on the coaſt of Syria, towards Cape Wedjh and Mount Carmel; and it is obſerved that they are moſt frequent at the equinoxes, and in a ſtormy ſky, obſcured by clouds.

Mountains of a certain height often afford examples of this deſcent of refrigerated air from the upper region. When their ſummits are covering with ſnow, at the approach of winter, impetuous torrents of wind, called by mariners *ſnow winds*, ruſh down from them. They then ſay, *the mountains are defending themſelves*, becauſe theſe winds blow on you, in whatever direction you approach them. The gulphs of Lyons and Alexandretta are remarked frequently to furniſh inſtances of this kind of winds.

On the ſame principles we may explain the phænomena of thoſe winds of the coaſt, vul-

(l) Dr. Franklin has explained them in the ſame manner.

garly

garly called *land breezes*. It is obſerved by mariners, that, in the Mediterranean, they blow from the land during the night, and in the day from the ſea; the cauſe of which is, that the air, rarefied by the heat of the day, and condenſed by the coldneſs of the night, ruſhes alternately from the land to the ſea, and the ſea to the land. Thus, in Syria, the ſide of Lebanon which faces the ſea, being heated by the ſun during the day, and eſpecially towards noon, the air, on its declivity, being rarefied, and loſing its relative equilibrium with that of the ſea, is forced upwards; but the new air, which takes its place, becoming heated, likewiſe, ſoon follows it, until, by this ſucceſſion, a current is formed ſimilar to that we obſerve in the funnels of a ſtove or chimney *(m)*. When the ſun ſets, this action ceaſes, the mountain cools, the air condenſes, and, condenſing, becomes heavier, and falls down again, thus forming a torrent which ruſhes along the declivity to the ſea. The current ceaſes in the morning, on the ſun's return, and the ſame round

(m) This is often ſenſible to the eye; but it is rendered ſtill more evident by approaching a ſilk thread or a piece of down to the funnels.

is repeated. This wind does not advance above two or three leagues into the ſea, becauſe the impulſe of its fall is gradually deſtroyed by the reſiſtance of the maſs of air into which it enters. The extent of the land breeze is in proportion to the height and ſteepneſs of this declivity. It reaches further at the foot of Lebanon, and the northern chain of eminences, becauſe the mountains in that quarter are loftier, ſteeper, and nearer to the ſea; and there are often violent and ſudden ſqualls at the mouth of the Kaſmia *(n)*, where the deep valley of Bekaa collecting the air in its narrow channel, propels it as from a funnel. Theſe winds do not extend ſo far on the coaſt of Paleſtine, becauſe the mountains there are not ſo lofty, and between them and the ſea there is a plain of four or five leagues; and at Gaza, and on the coaſt of Egypt, they are never known, becauſe that country has no declivity proper to cauſe them. In ſhort, they are every where ſtronger in ſummer, and feebler in winter, becauſe in the latter ſeaſon the heat and rarefaction are leſs conſiderable.

(n) Theſe ſqualls are ſo violent, that they ſometimes overſet boats; as I was once very near experiencing myſelf.

This

This comparative ſtate of the air of the ſea, and that of continents, is the cauſe of a phenomenon long ſince obſerved, viz. the general property of all land, and eſpecially mountains, to attract clouds. Whoever has viſited different ſea coaſts, cannot but have remarked that clouds continually ariſe at ſea, and regularly direct their courſe towards the land, and eſpecially the higheſt mountains. Some philoſophers have aſcribed this to an *attractive virtue*; but beſides that, this *occult quality* is as unintelligible as the ancient *horror of a vacuum*, the mechanical cauſe of that phenomenon may be explained by material agents; I mean the law of the equilibrium of fluids, by which the heavier air forces the lighter upwards; for continents, when under the ſame parallel, and of like elevation, being always more heated than ſeas, a conſtant current of air muſt take place, and drive the clouds from the ſea towards the land. This direction will be the more conſtant, the more the mountains are heated. If the vapours meet with a flat and level country, they will glide over it without falling, becauſe the land being equally heated, there is nothing to condenſe them.

This is the reaſon why it never, or but very rarely, rains, in ſummer, in Egypt, or the deſerts of Arabia and Africa. The air of theſe countries being heated and rarefied, raiſes the clouds, and, as it is the nature of all vapour to be elevated by hot air, they continue to float in the middle region, where the prevailing current carries them towards the higher parts of the continent, which perform, in ſome meaſure, as I have already ſaid, the office of a chimney. Being then at a greater diſtance from the ſurface of the earth, which is the great receptacle of heat, they are refrigerated and condenſed, till their particles collect into rain or ſnow. In winter, the effects vary with circumſtances. During that ſeaſon, when the ſun is remote from the countries we are ſpeaking of, the earth being leſs heated, the air in general aſſumes a temperature more nearly approaching to that of the high mountains; it becomes colder and more denſe; the vapours are no longer elevated to the ſame height; the clouds are formed lower down; and frequently fall quite to the earth, and are called fogs. At this period, accumulated by the weſterly winds, and by the abſence of the currents which carry

carry them off in ſummer, they are compelled to fall upon the plains, and hence the ſolution of the problem *(o)*: "The "evaporation being more conſiderable in "ſummer than in winter, why are there "more clouds, fogs, and rains in winter "than in ſummer?" Hence alſo we are able to explain another appearance obſervable both in Egypt and Paleſtine *(p)*, "that if "there be a continual and gentle rain, it will "fall rather in the night than in the day." In theſe countries, it is generally obſerved that clouds and fogs approach the earth at night, and riſe from it in the day, becauſe the preſence of the ſun always excites a degree of heat ſufficient to raiſe them; I have often experienced the truth of this at Cairo, in the months of July and Auguſt, 1783. At ſunriſe, we frequently had a fog, the thermometer being at ſeventeen degrees *(q)*; two hours after, the thermometer being at twenty,

(o) See Chap. IV.

(p) I have obſerved this in Paleſtine, in the months of November, December, and January, 1784 and 1785. The temperature of the plain of Paleſtine, eſpecially towards Gaza, is nearly the ſame with that of Egypt.

(q) By Reaumur's ſcale, (anſwering to 70 of Fahrenheit's).

or,

or, perhaps, twenty-four degrees, the ſky was covered with ſcattered clouds driving to the ſouth. On my return from Suez, about the ſame time, that is, between the 24th and 26th of July, we had no fog during the two nights we paſſed in the deſert; but on arriving, at break of day, in ſight of the valley of Egypt, I obſerved it covered with a body of vapours which had the appearance of a ſtagnant lake. As the day came on, they began to move and riſe, and, before eight o'clock in the morning, they had left the ground, and the air only ſhewed ſome ſcattered clouds, which took their courſe along the valley. The following year, being among the Druzes, I obſerved nearly ſimilar phænomena. Firſt, about the end of June, there was formed a chain of clouds, to be attributed, no doubt, to the overflowing of Egypt by the Nile *(r)*, and which, in fact, proceeded from that quarter, and were paſſing to the north-eaſt *(s)*. After this firſt

(r) It is not ſuperfluous to obſerve that the Nile, at that period, cauſes a current along the whole coaſt of Syria, which extends from Gaza to Cyprus.

(s) This appears to me to be the column of clouds mentioned by Baron de Tott. I have alſo obſerved the miſtineſs of the horizon of Egypt, of which he ſpeaks.

irruption,

irruption, towards the end of July, and in Auguſt, there was a ſecond ſeaſon of clouds. Every day, towards eleven o'clock, or about noon, the ſky was overcaſt, the ſun was often inviſible the whole afternoon, the *ſannin*, or ſummit of Lebanon, was capped with clouds, and many of them, aſcending the declivities, remained among the vineyards and the pines, and I was frequently ſo enveloped in a white, humid, warm and opake miſt, as not to be able to ſee four paces before me. About ten or eleven at night, the ſky grew clear, the ſtars appeared, and the remainder of the night was very fine; the ſun roſe ſhining, and, towards noon, the like appearances returned in the ſame circle. This repetition puzzled me the more, as I could not conceive what became of all this quantity of clouds. Part of them, it is true, paſſed the chain of the Sannin; theſe I might ſuppoſe had proceeded to Anti-Lebanon, or the deſert; but what was to become of that portion which was paſſing along the declivity, at the moment the ſun ſet, for there was neither dew nor rain into which they could be reſolved? To diſcover the cauſe of this, I aſcended

aſcended ſeveral mornings ſucceſſively, at day-break, a neighbouring eminence, and there, looking down upon the valley, and the ſea, diſtant, in an oblique line, about five leagues, I examined attentively the ſtate of the atmoſphere. I at firſt perceived nothing but a body of vapours which veiled the waters; and the horizon, towards the ſea, appeared to me very thick, while on the ſide of the mountains it was quite clear. As the ſun enlightened that part, I diſcovered clouds by the reflection of his rays; theſe at firſt ſeemed to me very low; but, as the heat encreaſed, they ſeparated, and roſe higher, and continually proceeding towards the mountain, continued there the remainder of the day, as I have deſcribed. From hence I concluded that the clouds I ſaw, thus mounting, formed a great part of thoſe which were on the declivities in the evening, and which, not being able to riſe ſufficiently high, had been ſeized by the cold air, and thrown back on the ſea, by the land breeze; I imagined that they were retained there the whole night, till the ſea breeze, getting up, drove them back upon the mountain, and hurried

hurried part of them over the ſummit, to fall on the other ſide in dews, or to moiſten the parched air of the deſert.

I have ſaid that theſe clouds conveyed no dews; and I have frequently remarked that there were fewer when the ſky was clouded, than when the heavens were clear. But the dew is at all times leſs abundant on theſe mountains, than on the coaſt, and in Egypt, which may be eaſily explained, by ſuppoſing that the air is not able to elevate to that height the exceſs of humidity with which it is loaded; for the dew, as is well known, is the exceſs of humidity which the heated air raiſes in vapour during the day, and which, condenſing by the coolneſs of the evening, falls down again in greater or leſs abundance, according to the vicinity of the country to the ſea *(t)*. Hence the exceſſive

(t) This reſolves a queſtion propoſed to me at Yafa; viz. "Why one ſweats more at Yafa, on the borders of "the ſea, than at Ramla, which is at three leagues diſ-"tance up the country?" The reaſon is, that the air of Yafa, being ſaturated with humid particles, imbibes the emanations of the body but ſlowly, while at Ramla, the air being more dry, abſorbs them faſter. For this reaſon, alſo, the breath is viſible in winter, in our climates, and not in ſummer.

dews

dews in the Delta, which are leſs conſiderable in the Thebais, and the deſert, as I am well aſſured; and if the moiſture does not fall when the heavens are obſcured, it is from its aſſuming the form of clouds, or being intercepted by them.

In other caſes, the ſky being ſerene, we ſee the clouds ſometimes diſperſe and diſſolve, like ſmoke; at others, form in an inſtant, and from a ſmall ſpeck, become of a prodigious ſize. This is particularly obſervable at the ſummit of Lebanon, and mariners have experienced that, the appearance of a cloud, on this peak, is an infallible preſage of a weſterly wind. At ſun-ſet, I have often obſerved theſe light clouds adhering to the ſides of the rocks of Nahr-el-Kelb, and augmenting ſo rapidly, that in an hour the valley was quite full of them. The inhabitants ſay, they are the vapours of the valley itſelf; but this valley being all ſtone, and without water, it is impoſſible they ſhould be exhalations from that; it is more natural to ſuppoſe them vapours of the atmoſphere, which, condenſed at the approach of night, fall in an imperceptible rain, and cauſe the miſt which is then obſerved. Fogs

are

are explicable on the ſame principles. There are none in the hot countries diſtant from the ſea, nor during the ſummer droughts; for, in theſe caſes, the air has no ſurplus of humidity. But they appear after the autumnal rains, and, even in ſummer, after heavy ſhowers, becauſe the earth has then imbibed matter for evaporation, and acquired a degree of coolneſs ſufficient to cauſe a condenſation of the vapours. In our climates, they always begin in the meadows, in preference to tilled ground. We frequently obſerve, at the ſetting of the ſun, a ſheet of ſmoke, forming on the graſs, which ſoon increaſes in extent and height. The reaſon of this is, that humid and cool places condenſe the falling vapours ſooner than thoſe which are dry and duſty.

A variety of other obſervations might be made on the formation and nature of theſe vapours, which though, in reality, the ſame, are called fogs, when they reſt on the ground, and clouds, when they riſe into the air. By conſidering their various properties, we ſhall perceive they are governed by the laws of combination, diſſolution, precipitation, and ſaturation; of which modern phyſics, under the

the appellation of chemiſtry, is employed in developing the theory. But to treat of them, in this place, I ſhould be under a neceſſity of entering into details which would lead me too far from my ſubject. I ſhall confine myſelf, therefore, to one concluding obſervation, relative to thunder.

Thunder is known in the Delta as well as in Syria; but with this difference, that in the Delta, and the plain of Paleſtine, it is extremely rare in ſummer, and more frequent in winter; while in the mountains, on the contrary, it is more common in ſummer, and very ſeldom heard in winter. In both theſe countries, it happens oftenеſt in the rainy ſeaſon, or about the time of the equinoxes, eſpecially the autumnal one; it is further remarkable, that it never comes on from the land-ſide, but always from the ſea. The ſtorms which fall on the Delta and Syria conſtantly come from the Mediterranean *(u)*. Theſe

(u) I do not know what paſſes in this reſpect in Upper Egypt: as for the Delta, it appears that it ſometimes receives clouds and thunder from the Red Sea. On the day that I left Cairo, (September 26th, 1783,) as night was coming on, a ſtorm appeared in the ſouth-eaſt,

Theſe ſtorms, in general, happen either in the evening or morning, and rarely in the middle of the day *(x)*; they are accompanied with violent ſhowers, and ſometimes with hail, which, in an hour's time, render the country full of little lakes. Theſe circumſtances, and, above all, this perpetual connection of clouds with thunder, may ſuggeſt the following remarks.

If thunder is conſtantly attended with clouds, and they are abſolutely neceſſary to its exiſtence, it muſt be cauſed by ſome of their elements. But in what manner are clouds formed? By the evaporation of water. How is this evaporation effected? By the preſence of the element of fire. Water

eaſt, which ſoon produced ſeveral claps of thunder, and ended by a violent fall of hail, as large as the largeſt ſort of peas. It continued ten or twelve minutes; and my companions and I had time enough to collect a quantity of hail-ſtones, ſufficient to fill two large glaſſes, and could ſay that we had drank iced water in Egypt. It is proper to add that it was at the time when the ſoutherly monſoon begins to blow on the Red-Sea.

(x) M. Niebuhr has alſo obſerved, at Moka and Bombay, that ſtorms always proceed from the ſea.

of itſelf is not volatile; ſome agent is neceſſary to raiſe it; this agent is fire; and hence, as has been already obſerved, "evaporation "is always in proportion to the heat applied "to water." Each particle of water is rendered volatile by a particle of fire, and, unqueſtionably, alſo, by a particle of air combined with it. This combination may be regarded as a neutral ſalt, and, comparing it with nitre, we may ſay the water in it repreſents the alkali, and the fire the nitrous acid. The clouds, thus compoſed, float in the atmoſphere until they meet with ſomething which ſeparates their conſtituent parts. If, from any cauſe, theſe particles are ſuddenly diſunited, a detonation is the conſequence, accompanied, as in nitre, with exploſion and light. The igneous matter, and the air, being inſtantly diſſipated by the ſhock, the water which was combined with them, reſtored to its natural gravity, falls precipitately from the height to which it had been elevated; and hence the violent ſhowers which follow loud claps of thunder, and which happen, generally, at the end of ſtorms, the igneous matter being then expended. Sometimes

times the particles of fire being combined with the air only, it melts like nitre; and this it is, doubtleſs, which produces thoſe lightnings, when no thunder is heard, called fires of the horizon *(feux d'horizon) (y)*. But is this igneous matter diſtinct from the electric? Does it obſerve peculiar laws and affinities in its combinations and detonations? This is what I ſhall not take upon me to examine. Theſe reſearches are not ſuited to a narrative of travels: I ought to confine myſelf to facts; and the few explanatory remarks I have added, though they were naturally ſuggeſted by them, have already led me too far from my ſubject.

(*y*) Shooting ſtars ſeem alſo to be a particular combination of igneous matter. The Maronites of Mar-Elias aſſured me that one of theſe ſtars falling, three years ago, on two mules of the convent, killed them both, making an exploſion like the report of a piſtol, and leaving no more traces than thunder.

CHAP. XXII.

Of the Inhabitants of Syria.

SYRIA, as well as Egypt, has undergone revolutions which have confounded the different races of its inhabitants. Within two thouſand five hundred years, we may reckon ten invaſions, which have introduced into that country a ſucceſſion of foreign nations. Firſt, the Aſſyrians of Nineveh, who, paſſing the Euphrates, about the year 750 before the Chriſtian æra, within ſixty years, obtained poſſeſſion of almoſt the whole country lying to the north of Judea. Next the Chaldeans, or Babylonians, who, having deſtroyed the power on which they were dependent, ſucceeded, as by hereditary right, to its poſſeſſions, and completed the conqueſt of Syria, except only the Iſle of Tyre. The Chaldeans were followed by the Perſians, under Cyrus, and the Perſians, by the Macedonians, under Alexander. It then ſeemed as if Syria was about to ceaſe being ſubject to foreign powers, and that it would obtain a diſtinct and independent government,

vernment, according to the natural right of every country; but the people, who found in the Seleucidæ only cruel deſpots and oppreſſors, ſeeing themſelves reduced to the neceſſity of bearing ſome yoke, preferred the lighteſt; and Syria, yielding to the arms of Pompey, became a province of the Roman empire.

Five centuries after, when the ſons of Theodoſius divided their immenſe patrimony, this country changed the capital to which it was to appertain, without changing its maſters, and was annexed to the empire of Conſtantinople. Such was its ſituation when, in the year 622, the Arabian tribes, collected under the banners of Mahomet, ſeized, or rather laid it waſte. Since that period, torn to pieces by the civil wars of the Fatmites, and the Ommiades, wreſted from the Caliphs by their rebellious governors, taken from them by the Turkman ſoldiery, invaded by the European cruſaders, retaken by the Mamlouks of Egypt, and ravaged by Tamerlane and his Tartars, it has at length fallen into the hands of the Ottoman Turks, who have been its

maſters for two hundred and ſixty-eight years.

Theſe viciſſitudes have introduced into the country diſtinct tribes of inhabitants, as various as the revolutions it has undergone, ſo that the people of Syria muſt not be conſidered as one ſingle nation, but rather as a mixture of different nations.

They may be divided into three principal claſſes.

Firſt, The poſterity of the people conquered by the Arabs, that is, the Greeks of the Lower Empire.

Secondly, The poſterity of the Arabian conquerors.

Thirdly, The preſent ruling people, the Ottoman Turks.

Of theſe three claſſes, the former muſt be again ſubdivided, in conſequence of ſeveral diſtinctions which have taken place among them. The Greeks then muſt be divided into,

Firſt, Greeks proper, vulgarly called *Schiſmatics*, or ſeparated from the Romiſh communion.

Secondly, Latin Greeks, re-united to that communion.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Maronites, or Greeks of the ſect of the Monk Maron, formerly independent of the two communions, but at preſent united to the latter.

The Arabs muſt be divided into,

Firſt, The proper deſcendents of the conquerors, who have greatly intermixed their blood, and are conſiderably the moſt numerous.

Secondly, The Motoualis, diſtinguiſhed from theſe by their religious opinions.

Thirdly, The Druzes, diſtinct likewiſe, from the ſame reaſon.

Fourthly, The Anſarians, who are alſo deſcended from the Arabs.

To theſe people, who are the cultivators and ſettled inhabitants of Syria, muſt ſtill be added three other wandering tribes, or paſtors, viz. the Turkmans, the Curds, and the Bedouin Arabs.

Such are the different races diſperſed over the country, between the ſea and the deſert, from Gaza to Alexandretta.

In this enumeration, it is remarkable that the ancient inhabitants have no remaining repreſentative; their diſtinguiſhing character is loſt and confounded in that of the Greeks,

who, in fact, by a continued reſidence from the days of Alexander, have had ſufficient time entirely to take place of the ancient people; the country alone, and a few traits of manners and cuſtoms, preſerve the veſtiges of diſtant ages.

Syria has not, like Egypt, refuſed to adopt the foreign races. They all become equally naturalized to the country. The features and complexion are governed by nearly the ſame laws there as in the ſouth of Europe, with the differences only which naturally reſult from the nature of the climate. Thus the inhabitants of the ſouthern plains are more ſwarthy than thoſe of the northern, and theſe, more ſo than the inhabitants of the mountains. In Lebanon, and the country of the Druzes, the complexion does not differ from that in our provinces in the middle of France. The women of Damaſcus and Tripoli are greatly boaſted for their fairneſs, and even the regularity of their features; but we muſt take this praiſe on truſt, ſince the veil, which they perpetually wear, allows no perſon to make nice obſervations. In ſeveral diſtricts, the women are leſs ſcrupulous, without being leſs chaſte. In Paleſtine, for example, you may

may ſee married women almoſt uncovered; but want and fatigue have robbed the countenance of all its charms; their eyes alone are almoſt every where beautiful; and the long drapery, which forms their general dreſs, permits the body freely to diſplay its ſhape: it is ſometimes without elegance, but its proportions at leaſt are no way injured. I do not recollect having ſeen in Syria, nor even in Egypt, two perſons crooked or deformed. It is true they are ſtrangers to thoſe tight-laced waiſts, which are ſo much admired among us: they are in no eſtimation in the eaſt; and the young women, aſſiſted by their mothers, very early ſtudy, even ſuperſtitious receipts, to acquire an *embonpoint:* happily, Nature, by reſiſting our caprices, has ſet bounds to our ſingularities, for we do not perceive in Syria, where the ſhape is not confined, that the body becomes any larger than in France, where it is ſo tightly laced.

The Syrians are, in general, of a middling ſtature, and are, as in all warm countries, leſs corpulent than the inhabitants of the north. We find, however, in the cities, ſome individuals whoſe amplitude of belly proves that the influence of diet is able, in a certain

a certain degree, to counterbalance that of climate.

Syria has no diſeaſe peculiar to itſelf, but the pimple of Aleppo, which I ſhall notice when I come to ſpeak of that city. The diſorders prevalent here are dyſenteries, inflammatory and intermittent fevers, which are the conſequences of the bad fruit which the people greedily devour. The ſmall-pox is ſometimes very fatal; but the general and moſt frequent illneſs is the cholic, the cauſes of which are very evident, when we conſider that every body eats to exceſs of unripe fruit, raw vegetables, honey, cheeſe, olives, ſtrong oil, ſour milk, and ill-fermented bread. Theſe are the uſual food of all the inhabitants; and the acid juices they contain produce crudities, nauſea, and even frequent vomitings of bile. Accordingly, the firſt preſcription in almoſt all diſorders is an emetic, which method of treatment, however, is only known to the European phyſicians. Bleeding, as I have already ſaid, is neither neceſſary, nor very uſeful. In imminent caſes, cream of tartar and tamarinds have the moſt certain ſucceſs.

The general language of Syria is the Arabic

Arabic tongue. M. Niebuhr reports, upon hearſay, that the Syriac is ſtill uſed in ſome villages of the mountains; but, though I interrogated, on this ſubject, ſeveral monks, who are perfectly well acquainted with the country, I have not been able to learn any thing like it. I have been told only that, in the towns of Maloula and Sidnaia, near Damaſcus, they ſpeak a dialect ſo corrupted, that it is difficult to be underſtood. But this difficulty proves nothing, ſince, in Syria, as in all the Arabian countries, the dialects vary at every place. The Syriac may be, therefore, regarded as a dead language; for the Maronites, who have preſerved it in their liturgy, and in their maſs, underſtand very little of it, while they recite them. We may aſſert the ſame of the Greek. Among the monks and ſchiſmatic prieſts, there are very few who have any knowledge of it, unleſs they have made it their particular ſtudy in the iſlands of the Archipelago: beſides, we know that the modern Greek is ſo corrupted, that it would no more enable a man to underſtand Demoſthenes, than the Italian to read Cicero. The Turkiſh language is only uſed, in Syria, by the military, perſons

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in office, and the Turkman hordes *(a)*. Some of the natives learn it, as the Turks learn Arabic, to facilitate their dealings with ſtrangers: but the pronunciation and accent of theſe two languages have ſo little analogy that they always continue foreign to each other. The Turks, habituated to a naſal and pompous proſody, are rarely able to imitate the harſh ſounds and ſtrong aſpirations of the Arabic. This tongue abounds ſo in harſh vowels and guttural conſonants that, on hearing it ſpoken for the firſt time, you would imagine they were gargling their throats. On this account it is diſagreeable and difficult to all Europeans; but ſuch is the power of habit that, when we complain to the Arabs of its aſperity, they accuſe us of a want of ear, and retort the charge upon our languages; among which they give the preference to the Italian; and they compare, with ſome reaſon, the French to the Turkiſh, and the Engliſh to the Perſian. In the dialects of their own we find

(a) At Alexandretta, and Beilam, which is contiguous, they ſpeak Turkiſh; but they muſt be regarded as frontiers of Caramania, where Turkiſh is the vulgar tongue.

almoſt

almoſt the ſame difference. The Arabic of Syria is much harſher than that of Egypt; the pronunciation of the profeſſors of the law at Cairo is eſteemed a model of facility and elegance. But, according to the obſervation of M. Niebuhr, that of the inhabitants of the Yemen, and the ſouthern coaſt, is infinitely ſofter, and gives a fluency to the Arabic, of which he could not have thought it ſuſceptible. Attempts have been made to eſtabliſh an analogy between the climates and the pronounciation of languages; it has been ſaid, for inſtance, that the inhabitants of the north ſpeak more with their lips and teeth than thoſe of the ſouth. This may be juſt when applied to ſome parts of our continent; but, to decide univerſally, we muſt make more circumſtantial and extenſive obſervations. We ſhould not too haſtily pronounce theſe general deciſions concerning languages and their different characters; becauſe we are always naturally led to judge from our own, and, conſequently, from a prejudice of habit extremely inimical to juſt reaſoning.

Among the different inhabitants of Syria I have mentioned, ſome are diſperſed, indifferently,

ferently, over every part of the country, others confine themſelves to particular ſpots, which it will be neceſſary to determine.

The Greeks proper, the Turks, and the Arabian peaſants, belong to the former claſs, with this difference, that the Turks reſide only in the towns where they are in poſſeſſion of the military employments, and the offices of the magiſtracy, and where they exerciſe the arts. The Arabs and the Greeks inhabit the villages, and form the claſs of huſbandmen in the country, and the inferior people in the towns. The part of the country which contains the moſt Greek villages is the Pachalic of Damaſcus.

The Greeks of the Romiſh communion, who are much leſs numerous than the ſchiſmatics, are all retired within the towns, where they cultivate the arts and commerce. The protection of the Franks, procured them, in the late war, a decided ſuperiority in trade, wherever there are European ſettlements.

The Maronites form a national body, which occupies, almoſt excluſively, the whole country compriſed between Nahr-el-kelb (the river of the Dog) and Nahr-el-bared (the

(the cold river), from the ſummit of the mountains on the eaſt, to the Mediterranean on the weſt.

The Druzes border upon them, and extend from Nahr-el-kelb to the neighbourhood of Sour, (Tyre) between the valley of Bekaa and the ſea.

The country of the Motoualis formerly included the valley of Bekaa, as far as Sour: but this people, of late years, have undergone, a revolution which has reduced them almoſt to nothing.

As for the Anſarians, they are diſperſed throughout the mountains, from Nahr-akkar as far as to Antakia; they are diſtinguiſhed into different tribes, ſuch as the Kelbia, the Kadmouſia, the Shamſia, &c.

The Turkmans, the Curds, and the Bedouins, have no fixed habitations, but are perpetually wandering with their tents and herds, in limited diſtricts, of which they look upon themſelves as the proprietors. The Turkman hordes generally encamp on the plain of Antioch; the Curds in the mountains between Alexandretta and the Euphrates; and the Arabs ſpread over the whole

whole frontier of Syria, adjacent to their deſerts, and even the plains of the interior part of the country, as thoſe of Paleſtine, Bekaa, and Galilee.

To form more diſtinct ideas of theſe different claſſes, let us conſider more circumſtantially what is peculiar to each of them.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of the paſtoral, or wandering Tribes of Syria.

SECT. I.

Of the Turkmans.

THE Turkmans are of the number of thoſe Tartar hordes, who, on the great revolutions of the empire of the Caliph, emigrated from the eaſtward of the Caſpian ſea, and ſpread themſelves over the vaſt plains of Armenia and Aſia Minor. Their language is the ſame with that of the Turks, and their mode of life nearly ſimilar to that of the Bedouin Arabs. Like them, they are paſtors, and conſequently obliged to travel over immenſe tracts of land to procure ſubſiſtence for their numerous herds. But there is this difference, that the countries frequented by the Turkmans being rich in paſturage, they can feed more cattle on them, and are therefore leſs diſperſed than

the Arabs of the deſert. Each of their *Ordous*, or camps, acknowledges a Chief, whoſe power is not determined by fixed laws, but governed by cuſtom and circumſtances. It is rarely abuſed, becauſe the ſociety is compact, and the nature of their ſituation maintains ſufficient equality among its members. Every man able to bear arms is anxious to carry them, ſince on his individual force depend both his perſonal ſafety, and the reſpect paid him by his companions. All their property conſiſts in cattle, that is camels, buffaloes, goats, and eſpecially ſheep. They live on milk, butter, and meat, which are in great abundance among them, and the ſurplus of which they ſell in the towns and the neighbouring country, for they are almoſt able alone to ſupply the butcheries. In return, they take arms, clothes, money, and corn. Their women ſpin wool, and make carpets, the uſe of which is immemorial in theſe countries, and conſequently indicates their manner of living to have been always the ſame. As for the men, their whole occupation conſiſts in ſmoking, and looking after their flocks. Perpetually on horſe-

horſe-back, with their lances on their ſhoulders, their crooked ſabres by their ſides, and their piſtols in their belts, they are expert horſemen and indefatigable ſoldiers. They have frequent differences with the Turks, who dread them; but as they are divided among themſelves, and form ſeparate camps, they do not aſſume that ſuperiority which their combined forces would enſure them. The Pachalics of Aleppo and Damaſcus, which are the only parts of Syria they frequent, may be computed to contain about thirty thouſand wandering Turkmans. A great number of theſe tribes paſs, in ſummer, into Armenia and Caramania, where they find graſs in greater abundance, and return to their former quarters in the winter. The Turkmans are reputed Muſſulmen, and generally bear the diſtinguiſhing mark, circumciſion. But they trouble themſelves very little about religion, and they have neither the ceremonies, nor the fanaticiſm of ſedentary nations. As for their manners, to deſcribe them accurately, it would be neceſſary to have lived among them. They have, however, the reputation of not being robbers, like the Arabs, though they are neither leſs generous, nor leſs hoſpitable than they;

and when we conſider that they live in plenty, without being rich, and are inured to war, and hardened by fatigue and danger, we may preſume they are equally removed from the ignorance and ſervility of the peaſants, and the corruption and ſelfiſhneſs of the inhabitants of the towns.

SECT. II.

Of the Curds.

The Curds are another national body, the divided tribes of which are equally diſperſed over the Lower Aſia, and have extended themſelves very widely, eſpecially within the laſt hundred years. Their original country is the chain of mountains from whence iſſue the different branches of the Tigris, which, ſurrounding the upper part of the great Zab, paſſes to the ſouthward, as far as the frontiers of the Irak-adjami, or Perſian Irak *(a)*. In modern geography, it

(a) Adjam is the Arabic name for the Perſians. The Greeks were acquainted with it, and expreſſed it by *Achemen-ides.*

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is known by the name of *Curd-eſtan*. This country is mentioned in the moſt ancient traditions and hiſtories of the eaſt, in which it is made the ſcene of ſeveral mythological events. The Chaldean Beroſus, and the Armenian Maribas, cited by Moſes Chorenenſis, aſſert that it was in the mountains Gord-ouæi *(b)*, that Xiſuthrus landed after eſcaping from the deluge; and the local circumſtances which they add, prove, what was otherwiſe ſufficiently evident, that *Gord* and *Curd* are the ſame. Thoſe were the ſame Curds who are mentioned by Xenophon under the denomination of *Card-uchi*, and who oppoſed the retreat of the Ten Thouſand. This hiſtorian obſerves that, though ſhut in on all ſides by the Perſian empire, they had conſtantly braved the power of the *Great King*, and the arms of his *Satraps*. They have changed but little in their modern ſtate; for, though, in appearance, tributaries to the Porte, they pay very little reſpect to the orders of the Grand Signior, or his Pachas. M. Niebuhr, who travelled in theſe countries in 1769, reports, that in their mountains they are ſubject to a

(b) Strabo, lib. 11. ſays, that the Niphates, and its chain of mountains, are called *Gordouæi*.

ſort of feodal government, which appears to me ſimilar to that we obſerve among the Druzes. Each village has its chief, and the whole nation is divided into different and independent factions. The diſputes inſeparable from this ſtate of anarchy have detached from the nation a great number of tribes and families, which have adopted the wandering life of the Turkmans and Arabs.

Theſe are diſperſed in the Diarbekir, and over the plains of Arzroum, Erivan, Sivas, Aleppo and Damaſcus: all their tribes united are eſtimated to exceed one hundred and forty thouſand *tents*, that is, one hundred and forty thouſand armed men. Like the Turkmans, theſe Curds are paſtors and wanderers; but differ from them in ſome particular cuſtoms. The Turkmans give their daughters a marriage dower: the Curds receive a premium for them. The Turkmans pay no reſpect to that antiquity of extraction which we call nobility: the Curds honour it above every thing. The Turkmans do not ſteal: the Curds are almoſt every where looked upon as plunderers; on which account, they are much dreaded in the neighbourhood of Aleppo, and of Antioch, where they

they occupy, under the name of Bagdaſhlia, the mountains to the eaſt of Beilam, as far as near Kles. In this Pachalic, and in that of Damaſcus, their number exceeds twenty thouſand tents and huts; for they have alſo fixed habitations. They are reputed Mahometans; but they never trouble themſelves about religious rites or opinions. Several of them, diſtinguiſhed by the name of Yazdia, worſhip *Shaitan*, or Satan, that is, the genius who is the *enemy* (of God). This notion, eſpecially prevalent in the Diarbekir, and the frontiers of Perſia, is a relic of the ancient ſyſtem of the *good* and *evil principles*, which, varied according to the ſpirit of the Perſian, Jewiſh, Chriſtian, and Mahometan doctrines, has continually prevailed in theſe countries. Zoroaſter is generally conſidered as its author; but, long before his time, Egypt acknowledged Oroſmades and Arimanius, under the names of Oſiris and Typhon. It is no leſs an error, likewiſe, to ſuppoſe, that this dogma was not propagated prior to the reign of Darius Hyſtaſpes, ſince Zoroaſter, who taught it, flouriſhed in Media, and was cotemporary with Solomon.

Language is the principal indication of the conſanguinity of nations. That of the Curds is divided into three dialects. It has neither the aſpirations nor the gutturals of the Arabic; and I am aſſured that it does not reſemble the Perſian; ſo that it muſt be an original language. Now, if we conſider the antiquity of the people who ſpeak it; and that we know they are related to the Medes, Aſſyrians, Perſians, and even the Parthians *(c)*, we may be allowed to conjecture, that a knowledge of this tongue might throw ſome light on the ancient hiſtory of theſe countries. There is no known dictionary of it; but it would be no difficult matter to form one. If the government of France ſhould think proper to offer encouragements to the Dragomans, or to the miſſionaries of Aleppo, the Diarbekir, or Bagdad, proper perſons might ſoon be found to accompliſh ſuch an undertaking *(d)*.

SECT.

(c) "On the Tigris," ſays Strabo, lib. 16, "are "many places belonging to the Parthians, whom the "ancients called Carduchi."

(d) The Empreſs of Ruſſia has lately given orders to Doctor Pallas to make a collection of all the languages ſpoken

SECT. III.

Of the Bedouin Arabs.

A third wandering people in Syria, are the Bedouin Arabs, whom we have already found in Egypt. Of theſe I made but a ſlight mention in treating of that province, becauſe, having only had a tranſient view of them, without knowing their language, their name ſuggeſted but few ideas to my mind; but having been better acquainted with them

ſpoken in the Ruſſian empire; and theſe reſearches muſt extend even to the Cuban and Georgia; and, perhaps, to Curdeſtan. When this collection is completed, it will be neceſſary to reduce all the alphabets of theſe languages to one; for this diverſity of Arabic, Armenian, Georgian, Iberian, and Tartarian alphabets is a great obſtacle to the advancement of ſcience. This will, perhaps, appear impoſſible to many perſons; but, from ſome experiments of the ſame nature, which I have myſelf made, I think I may venture to pronounce it not only practicable, but eaſy. It is ſufficient to be well acquainted with the elements of ſpeech, to be able to claſs the vowels and conſonants of all the alphabets. It is proper alſo to obſerve here, that the firſt book of every nation is the dictionary of its language.

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in Syria; having even made a journey to one of their camps, near Gaza, and lived ſeveral days among them, I am now able to treat of them with more minuteneſs and accuracy.

In general, when ſpeaking of the Arabs, we ſhould diſtinguiſh whether they are cultivators, or paſtors; for this difference in their mode of life occaſions ſo great a one in their manners, and genius, that they become almoſt foreign nations, with reſpect to each other. In the former caſe, leading a ſedentary life, attached to the ſame ſoil, and ſubject to regular governments, the ſocial ſtate in which they live, very nearly reſembles our own. Such are the inhabitants of the Yemen; and ſuch, alſo, are the deſcendants of thoſe ancient conquerors, who have either entirely, or in part, given inhabitants to Syria, Egypt, and the Barbary ſtates. In the ſecond caſe, having only a tranſient intereſt in the ſoil, perpetually removing their tents from one place to another, and under ſubjection to no laws, their mode of exiſtence is neither that of poliſhed nations, nor of ſavages; and, therefore, more particularly merits our attention. Such are the

Bedouins,

Bedouins, or inhabitants of the vaſt deſerts which extend from the confines of Perſia, to Morocco. Though divided into independent communities, or tribes, not unfrequently hoſtile to each other, they may ſtill be conſidered as forming one nation. The reſemblance of their language is a manifeſt token of this relationſhip. The only difference that exiſts between them is, that the African tribes are of a leſs ancient origin, being poſterior to the conqueſt of theſe countries by the Caliphs, or ſucceſſors of Mahomet; while the tribes of the deſert of Arabia, properly ſo called, have deſcended by an uninterrupted ſucceſſion from the remoteſt ages; and it is of theſe I mean more eſpecially to treat, as being more immediately connected with my ſubject. To theſe the orientals are accuſtomed to appropriate the name of Arabs, as being the moſt ancient, and the pureſt race. The term *Bedaoui* is added as a ſynonimous expreſſion, ſignifying, as I have obſerved, inhabitant of the *Deſert*; and this term has the greater propriety, as the word *Arab*, in the ancient language of theſe countries, ſignifies a ſolitude or deſert.

It is not without reaſon that the inhabitants of the deſert boaſt of being the pureſt and the beſt preſerved race of all the Arab tribes: for never have they been conquered, nor have they mixed with any other people, by making conqueſts; for thoſe by which the general name of Arabs has been rendered famous, really belong only to the tribes of the Hedjaz, and the Yemen; thoſe who dwelt in the interior parts of the country, never emigrated at the time of the revolution effected by Mahomet; or if they did take any part in it, it was confined to a few individuals, detached by motives of ambition. Thus we find the prophet, in his Koran, continually ſtiling the Arabs of the deſert rebels, and infidels; nor has ſo great a length of time produced any very conſiderable change. We may aſſert they have, in every reſpect, retained their primitive independence and ſimplicity. Every thing that ancient hiſtory has related of their cuſtoms, manners, language, and even their prejudices, is almoſt minutely true of them to this day; and if we conſider, beſides, that this unity of character, preſerved through ſuch a number of ages, ſtill ſubſiſts, even in the moſt diſtant ſituations,

tions, that is, that the tribes moſt remote from each other preſerve an exact reſemblance, it muſt be allowed, that the circumſtances which accompany ſo peculiar a moral ſtate, are a ſubject of moſt curious enquiry.

In Europe, and eſpecially in its more civilized and improved countries, where we have no examples of wandering people, we can ſcarcely conceive what can induce men to adopt a mode of life ſo repugnant to our ideas. We even conceive with difficulty what a deſert is, or how it is poſſible for a country to have inhabitants, if it be barren; or why it is not better peopled, if it be capable of cultivation. I have been perplexed, myſelf, with theſe difficulties, as well as others; for which reaſon, I ſhall dwell more circumſtantially on the facts which will furniſh us with their explanation.

The wandering and paſtoral life led by ſeveral Aſiatic nations, ariſes from two cauſes. The firſt is, the nature of the ſoil, which, being improper for cultivation, compels men to have recourſe to animals, which content themſelves with the wild herbage of the earth. Where this herbage is but

but thin, a ſingle animal will ſoon conſume the produce of a great extent of ground, and it will be neceſſary to run over large tracts of land. Such is the caſe of the Arabs in the deſert of Arabia, properly ſo called, and in that of Africa.

The ſecond cauſe muſt be attributed to habit, ſince the ſoil is cultivable, and even fertile, in many places; ſuch as the frontiers of Syria, the Diarbekir, Natolia, and the greateſt part of the diſtricts frequented by the Curds and Turkmans. But it appears to me that theſe habits are only the effect of the political ſtate of the country, ſo that the primary cauſe of them muſt be referred to the government itſelf. This opinion is ſupported by daily facts; for as often as the different hordes and wandering tribes find peace and ſecurity, and a poſſibility of procuring ſufficient proviſions, in any diſtrict, they take up their reſidence in it, and adopt, inſenſibly, a ſettled life, and the arts of cultivation. But when, on the contrary, the tyranny of the government drives the inhabitants of a village to extremity, the peaſants deſert their houſes, withdraw with their families into the mountains, or wander in the

the plains, taking care frequently to change their place of habitation, to avoid being ſurpriſed. It often happens even that individuals, turned robbers, in order to withdraw themſelves from the laws, or from tyranny, unite and form little camps, which maintain themſelves by arms, and, increaſing, become new hordes, and new tribes. We may pronounce, therefore, that in cultivable countries, the wandering life originates in the injuſtice or want of policy of the government; and that the ſedentary and cultivating ſtate is that to which mankind is moſt naturally inclined.

With reſpect to the Arabs, they ſeem eſpecially condemned to a wandering life, by the very nature of their deſerts. To paint to himſelf theſe deſerts, the reader muſt imagine a ſky almoſt perpetually inflamed, and without clouds, immenſe and boundleſs plains, without houſes, trees, rivulets, or hills, where the eye frequently meets nothing but an extenſive and uniform horizon, like the ſea, though in ſome places the ground is uneven and ſtoney. Almoſt invariably naked on every ſide, the earth preſents nothing but a few wild plants, thinly

ſcattered,

ſcattered, and thickets, whoſe ſolitude is rarely diſturbed but by antelopes, hares, locuſts, and rats. Such is the nature of nearly the whole country, which extends ſix hundred leagues in length, and three hundred in breadth, and ſtretches from Aleppo to the Arabian ſea, and from Egypt to the Perſian gulph.

It muſt not, however, be imagined that the ſoil in ſo great an extent is every where the ſame; it varies conſiderably in different places. On the frontiers of Syria, for example, the earth is in general fat and cultivable, nay, even fruitful. It is the ſame alſo on the banks of the Euphrates; but in the internal parts of the country, and towards the ſouth, it becomes white and chalky, as in the parallel of Damaſcus; rocky, as in the Tih, and the Hedjaz; and a pure ſand, as to the eaſtward of the Yemen. This variety in the qualities of the ſoil is productive of ſome minute differences in the condition of the Bedouins. For inſtance, in the more ſterile countries, that is thoſe which produce but few plants, the tribes are feeble, and very diſtant; which is the caſe in the deſert of Suez, that of the Red Sea, and the interior of

of the Great Deſert, called the Najd. Where the ſoil is more fruitful, as between Damaſcus and the Euphrates, the tribes are more numerous, and leſs diſtant from each other; and, laſtly, in the cultivable diſtricts, ſuch as the Pachalics of Aleppo, the Hauran, and the neighbourhood of Gaza, the camps are frequent and contiguous. In the former caſe, the Bedouins are merely paſtors, and ſubſiſt only on the produce of their herds, and on a few dates, and fleſh meat, which they eat, either freſh, or dried in the ſun, and reduced to a powder. In the latter, they ſow ſome land, and add cheeſe, barley, and even rice, to their fleſh and milk.

If we examine the cauſes of the ſterility and uncultivated ſtate of the Deſert, we ſhall find it is principally to be attributed to the abſence of fountains and rivers, and, in general, to the want of water. This want of water itſelf is occaſioned by the nature of the country, which being flat, and deſtitute of mountains, the clouds glide over its heated ſurface, as I have already remarked is the caſe with Egypt. They never reſt there but in winter, when the coldneſs of the atmoſphere hinders them from riſing, and condenſes

them into rain. The nakedneſs of this country is alſo another cauſe of drought, ſince the air is for that reaſon more eaſily heated, and compels the clouds to riſe. It is probable that a change of climate might be effected, if the whole deſert were planted with trees; as for example, with pine trees.

The conſequence of the winter rains is, that in thoſe parts where the ſoil is good, as on the frontiers of Syria, a cultivation takes place very ſimilar to that of even the interior parts of the province; but as theſe rains neither produce ſprings, nor conſtant rivulets, the inhabitants are expoſed to the inconvenience of wanting water the whole ſummer. To remedy this it is neceſſary to have recourſe to art, and to form wells, reſervoirs, and ciſterns, in which they collect their annual ſupplies: ſuch works require money and labour, and are, after all, expoſed to a variety of accidents. War may deſtroy in one day, the labour of many months, and the reſources of the year. A drought, which is but too common, may cauſe the failure of a crop, and reduce the inhabitants even to a total want of water. It is true, that by digging it is almoſt every where

to

to be found, at from ſix to twenty feet depth, but this water is brackiſh, as in all the deſert of Arabia and Africa *(e)*; it alſo frequently dries up, when thirſt and famine ſucceed; and, if the government does not lend its aid, the villages are deſerted. It is evident that agriculture muſt be very precarious in ſuch a country, and that under a government like that of the Turks, it is ſafer to lead a wandering life, than to reſide in a fixed habitation, and rely for ſubſiſtence on agriculture.

In thoſe diſtricts where the ſoil is ſtoney and ſandy, as in the Tih, the Hedjaz, and the Najd, theſe rains make the ſeeds of the wild plants ſhoot, and revive the thickets, ranunculas, wormwood, and kali. They render the lower grounds marſhy, which then produce reeds and graſs; and the plain aſſumes a tolerable degree of verdure. This is the ſeaſon of abundance both for the herds and their maſters; but on the return of the

(e) This ſaline quality is ſo inherent in the ſoil, that it impregnates even the plants. All thoſe of the deſert abound in alkali, and Glauber's ſalt; but it is remarkable that this ſalt diminiſhes as we approach the mountains, where it is ſcarcely ſenſible.

heats, every thing is parched up, and the earth, converted into a grey, and fine duſt, preſents nothing but dry ſtems, as hard as wood, on which neither horſes, oxen, nor even goats can feed. In this ſtate the Deſert would become uninhabitable, and muſt be totally abandoned, had not nature formed an animal no leſs hardy and frugal than the ſoil is ſterile and ungrateful; I mean the camel. No creature ſeems ſo peculiarly fitted to the climate in which it exiſts. We cannot doubt but the nature of the one has been adapted to that of the other by ſome *diſpoſing intelligence*. Deſigning the camel to dwell in a country where he can find little nouriſhment, Nature has been ſparing of her materials in the whole of his formation. She has not beſtowed on him the plump fleſhineſs of the ox, horſe, or elephant; but, limiting herſelf to what is ſtrictly neceſſary, ſhe has given him a ſmall head without ears, at the end of a long neck without fleſh. She has taken from his legs and thighs every muſcle not immediately requiſite for motion; and, in ſhort, has beſtowed on his withered body only the veſſels and tendons neceſſary to connect its frame together. She has furniſhed

niſhed him with a ſtrong jaw, that he may grind the hardeſt aliments; but leſt he ſhould conſume too much, ſhe has contracted his ſtomach, and obliged him to chew the cud. She has lined his foot with a lump of fleſh, which, ſliding in the mud, and being no way adapted to climbing, fits him only for a dry, level, and ſandy ſoil, like that of Arabia: ſhe has evidently deſtined him likewiſe to ſlavery, by refuſing him every ſort of defence againſt his enemies. Deſtitute of the horns of the bull, the hoof of the horſe, the tooth of the elephant, and the ſwiftneſs of the ſtag, how can the camel reſiſt or avoid the attacks of the lion, the tyger, or even the wolf? To preſerve the ſpecies, therefore, Nature has concealed him in the depth of the vaſt deſerts, where the want of vegetables can attract no game, and whence the want of game repels every voracious animal. Tyranny muſt have expelled man from the habitable parts of the earth, before the camel could have loſt his liberty. Become domeſtic, he has rendered habitable the moſt barren ſoil the world contains. He alone ſupplies all his maſter's wants. The milk of the camel nouriſhes the family of the Arab, under the varied forms

of curds, cheeſe, and butter; and they often feed upon his fleſh. Slippers and harneſs are made of his ſkin, and tents and clothing of his hair. Heavy burthens are tranſported by his means; and when the earth denies forage to the horſe, ſo valuable to the Bedouin, the ſhe camel ſupplies that deficiency by her milk, at no other coſt, for ſo many advantages, than a few ſtalks of brambles or wormwood, and pounded date kernels. So great is the importance of the camel to the deſert, that were it deprived of that uſeful animal, it muſt infallibly loſe every inhabitant.

Such is the ſituation in which nature has placed the Bedouins, to render them a race of men equally ſingular in their phyſical and moral character. This ſingularity is ſo ſtriking, that even their neighbours, the Syrians, regard them as extraordinary beings; eſpecially thoſe tribes which dwell in the depths of the deſerts, ſuch as thoſe of Anaza, Kaibar, Tai, and others, which never approach the towns. When, in the time of Shaik Daher, ſome of their horſemen came as far as Acre, they excited the ſame curioſity there, as a viſit from the ſavages of America would among us. Every one viewed with ſurpriſe theſe men,

who

who were more diminutive, meagre, and ſwarthy, than any of the known Bedouins. Their withered legs had no calves, and appeared to conſiſt merely of tendons. Their bellies ſeemed ſhrunk to their backs, and their hair was frizzled almoſt as much as that of the negroes. They, on the other hand, were no leſs aſtoniſhed at every thing they ſaw; they could neither conceive how the houſes and minarets could ſtand erect, nor how men ventured to dwell beneath them, and always on the ſame ſpot; but, above all, they were in an ecſtaſy at beholding the ſea, nor could they comprehend what that *deſert of water* could be. They were told of moſques, prayers, and ablutions; but they aſked what thoſe meant, and enquired who Moſes, Jeſus Chriſt, and Mahomet, were; and why, ſince the inhabitants were not of ſeparate tribes, they followed different leaders?

We may imagine, that the Arabs of the frontiers are not ſuch novices; there are even ſeveral ſmall tribes of them, who, living in the midſt of the country, as in the valley of Bekaa, that of the Jordan, and in Paleſtine, approach nearer to the condition of the peaſants; but theſe are deſpiſed by the others,

who look upon them as baſtard Arabs, and *Rayas*, or ſlaves of the Turks.

In general, the Bedouins are ſmall, meagre, and tawny; more ſo, however, in the heart of the deſert, than on the frontiers of the cultivated country; but they are always of a darker complexion than the neighbouring peaſants. They alſo differ among themſelves in the ſame camp; and I have remarked, that the Shaiks, that is, the rich, and their attendants, were always taller, and more corpulent, than the common claſs. I have ſeen ſome of them above five feet five and ſix inches high; though, in general, they do not exceed five feet two inches. This difference can only be attributed to their food, with which the former are ſupplied more abundantly than the latter *(f)*. It may, likewiſe, be affirmed, that the lower claſs of Bedouins live in a ſtate of habitual wretchedneſs and famine. It will appear almoſt incredible to us, but it is an undoubted fact, that the quantity of food uſually conſumed by the

(f) The effects of this are equally evident in the Arabian and Turkman camels; for theſe latter, dwelling in countries rich in forage, are become a ſpecies more robuſt and fleſhy than the former.

greateſt

greateſt part of them, does not exceed ſix ounces a day. This abſtinence is moſt remarkable among the tribes of the Najd, and the Hedjaz. Six or ſeven dates ſoaked in melted butter, a little freſh milk, or curds, ſerve a man a whole day; and he eſteems himſelf happy, when he can add a ſmall quantity of coarſe flour, or a little ball of rice. Meat is reſerved for the greateſt feſtivals; and they never kill a kid but for a marriage or a funeral. A few wealthy and generous Shaiks alone can kill young camels, and eat baked rice with their victuals. In times of dearth, the vulgar, always half famiſhed, do not diſdain the moſt wretched kinds of food; and eat locuſts, rats, lizards, and ſerpents, which they boil on briars. Hence are they ſuch plunderers of the cultivated lands, and robbers on the high-roads: hence, alſo, their delicate conſtitution, and their diminutive and meagre bodies, which are rather active than vigorous. It may be worth while to remark, that their evacuations of every kind, even perſpiration, are extremely ſmall; their blood is ſo deſtitute of ſeroſity, that nothing but the greateſt heat can preſerve its fluidity. This, however, does

does not prevent them from being tolerably healthy, in other reſpects, for maladies are leſs frequent among them than among the inhabitants of the cultivated country.

From theſe facts, we are by no means juſtified in concluding, that the frugality of the Arabs is a virtue purely of choice, or even of climate. The extreme heat in which they live, unqueſtionably facilitates their abſtinence, by deſtroying that activity which cold gives to the ſtomach. Their being habituated alſo to ſo ſparing a diet, by hindering the dilatation of the ſtomach, becomes doubtleſs a means of their ſupporting ſuch abſtemiouſneſs; but the chief and primary cauſe of this habit, is with them, as with the reſt of mankind, the neceſſity of the circumſtances in which they are placed, either from the nature of the ſoil, as I have before explained, or that ſtate of ſociety in which they live, and which I ſhall now proceed to examine.

I have already ſaid, that the Bedouin Arabs are divided into tribes, which conſtitute ſo many diſtinct nations. Each of theſe tribes appropriates to itſelf a certain tract of land; in this they do not differ from cultivating nations, except that their territory requires

requires a greater extent, in order to furniſh ſubſiſtence for their herds throughout the year. Each of theſe tribes is collected in one or more camps, which are diſperſed through the country, and which make a ſucceſſive progreſs over the whole, in proportion as it is exhauſted by the cattle; hence it is, that within a great extent a few ſpots only are inhabited, which vary from one day to another; but as the entire ſpace is neceſſary for the annual ſubſiſtence of the tribe, whoever encroaches on it is deemed a violator of property; this is with them the law of nations. If, therefore, a tribe, or any of its ſubjects, enter upon a foreign territory, they are treated as enemies, and robbers, and a war breaks out. Now, as all the tribes have affinities with each other by alliances of blood, or treaties, leagues are formed, which render theſe wars more or leſs general. The manner of proceeding, on ſuch occaſions, is very ſimple. The offence made known, they mount their horſes, and ſeek the enemy; when they meet, they enter into a parley, and the matter is frequently made up; if not, they attack either in ſmall bodies, or man to man. They encounter each

each other at full ſpeed, with fixed lances, which they ſometimes dart, notwithſtanding their length, at the flying enemy; the victory is rarely conteſted; it is decided by the firſt ſhock, and the vanquiſhed take to flight full gallop over the naked plain of the deſert. Night generally favours their eſcape from the conqueror. The tribe which has loſt the battle ſtrikes its tents, removes to a diſtance, by forced marches, and ſeeks an aſylum among its allies. The enemy, ſatisfied with their ſucceſs, drive their herds farther on, and the fugitives ſoon after return to their former ſituation. But the ſlaughter made in theſe engagements frequently ſows the ſeeds of hatreds which perpetuate theſe diſſenſions. The intereſt of the common ſafety has, for ages, eſtabliſhed a law among them, which decrees that the blood of every man who is ſlain muſt be avenged by that of his murderer. This vengeance is called *Tar*, or retaliation; and the right of exacting it devolves on the neareſt of kin to the deceaſed. So nice are the Arabs on this point of honour, that if any one neglects to ſeek his retaliation, he is diſgraced for ever. He, therefore, watches every opportunity

opportunity of revenge: if his enemy periſhes from any other cauſe, ſtill he is not ſatisfied, and his vengeance is directed againſt the neareſt relation. Theſe animoſities are tranſmitted, as an inheritance, from father to children, and never ceaſe but by the extinction of one of the families, unleſs they agree to ſacrifice the criminal, or *purchaſe the blood* for a ſtated price, in money or in flocks. Without this ſatisfaction, there is neither peace, nor truce, nor alliances between them, nor ſometimes, even between whole tribes: *There is blood between us*, ſay they, on every occaſion; and this expreſſion is an inſurmountable barrier. Such accidents being neceſſarily numerous in a long courſe of time, the greater part of the tribes have ancient quarrels, and live in an habitual ſtate of war; which, together with their way of life, renders the Bedouins a military people, though they have made no great progreſs in war as an art.

Their camps are formed in a kind of irregular circle, compoſed of a ſingle row of tents, with greater or leſs intervals. Theſe tents, made of goat or camels hair, are black or brown, in which they differ from thoſe

of

of the Turkmans, which are white. They are ſtretched on three or four pickets, only five or ſix feet high, which gives them a very flat appearance; at a diſtance, one of theſe camps ſeems only like a number of black ſpots; but the piercing eye of the Bedouin is not to be deceived. Each tent, inhabited by a family, is divided, by a curtain, into two apartments, one of which is appropriated to the women. The empty ſpace within the large circle ſerves to fold their cattle every evening. They never have any intrenchments; their only advanced guards and patroles are dogs; their horſes remain ſaddled, and ready to mount on the firſt alarm; but, as they are utter ſtrangers to all order and diſcipline, theſe camps, always eaſy to ſurpriſe, afford no defence in caſe of an attack: accidents, therefore, very frequently happen, and cattle are carried off every day; a ſpecies of marauding war in which the Arabs are very experienced.

The tribes which live in the vicinity of the Turks, are ſtill more accuſtomed to attacks and alarms; for theſe ſtrangers, arrogating to themſelves, in right of conqueſt, the property of the whole country, treat the Arabs

Arabs as rebel vaſſals, or as turbulent and dangerous enemies. On this principle, they never ceaſe to wage ſecret or open war againſt them. The Pachas ſtudy every occaſion to haraſs them. Sometimes they conteſt with them a territory which they had let them, and at others demand a tribute which they never agreed to pay. Should a family of Shaiks be divided by intereſt or ambition, they alternately ſuccour each party, and conclude by the deſtruction of both. Frequently too they poiſon or aſſaſſinate thoſe chiefs whoſe courage or abilities they dread, though they ſhould even be their allies. The Arabs, on their ſide, regarding the Turks as uſurpers and treacherous enemies, watch every opportunity to do them injury. Unfortunately, their vengeance falls oftener on the innocent than the guilty. The harmleſs peaſant generally ſuffers for the offences of the ſoldier. On the ſlighteſt alarm, the Arabs cut their harveſts, carry off their flocks, and intercept their communication and commerce. The peaſant calls them thieves, and with reaſon ; but the Bedouins claim the right of war, and, perhaps, they alſo are not in the wrong. However this may be, theſe depredations occaſion a miſunderſtanding

miſunderſtanding between the Bedouins and the inhabitants of the cultivated country, which renders them mutual enemies.

Such is the external ſituation of the Arabs. It is ſubject to great viciſſitudes, according to the good or bad conduct of their chiefs. Sometimes a feeble tribe raiſes and aggrandizes itſelf, whilſt another, which was powerful, falls into decay, or perhaps is entirely annihilated; not that all its members periſh, but they incorporate themſelves with ſome other; and this is the conſequence of the internal conſtitution of the tribes. Each tribe is compoſed of one or more principal families, the members of which bear the title of Shaiks, i. e. chiefs or lords. Theſe families have a great reſemblance to the Patricians of Rome, and the nobles of modern Europe. One of the Shaiks has the ſupreme command over the others. He is the general of their little army, and ſometimes aſſumes the title of *Emir*, which ſignifies Commander and Prince. The more relations, children, and allies he has, the greater is his influence and power. To theſe he adds particular adherents, whom he ſtudiouſly attaches to him, by ſupplying all their wants. But beſides this, a number of ſmall families,

families, who, not being ſtrong enough to live independent, ſtand in need of protection and alliances, range themſelves under the banners of this chief. Such an union is called *kabila*, or tribe. Theſe tribes are diſtinguiſhed from each other by the name of their reſpective chiefs, or by that of the ruling family; and when they ſpeak of any of the individuals who compoſe them, they call them the *children* of ſuch a chief, though they may not be all really of his blood, and he himſelf may have been long ſince dead. Thus they ſay, *Beni Temin*, *Oulad Tai*, the children of Temin and of Tai. This mode of expreſſion is even applied, by metaphor, to the names of countries: the uſual phraſe for denoting their inhabitants, being to call them *the children of ſuch a place*. Thus the Arabs ſay, *Oulad Maſr*, the Egyptians; *Oulad Sham*, the Syrians: they would alſo ſay, *Oulad Franſa*, the French; *Oulad Moſkou*, the Ruſſians, a remark which is not unimportant to ancient hiſtory.

The government of this ſociety is at once republican, ariſtocratical, and even deſpotic, without exactly correſponding with any of theſe forms. It is republican, inaſmuch as

the people have a great influence in all affairs, and as nothing can be tranſacted without the conſent of a majority. It is ariſtocratical, becauſe the families of the Shaiks poſſeſs ſome of the prerogatives which every where accompany power; and, laſtly, it is deſpotic, becauſe the principal Shaik has an indefinite and almoſt abſolute authority, which, when he happens to be a man of credit and influence, he may even abuſe; but the ſtate of theſe tribes confines even this abuſe to very narrow limits; for if a chief ſhould commit an act of injuſtice, if, for example, he ſhould kill an Arab, it would be almoſt impoſſible for him to eſcape puniſhment; the reſentment of the offended party would pay no reſpect to his dignity; the law of *retaliation* would be put in force: and, ſhould he not pay the blood, he would be infallibly aſſaſſinated, which, from the ſimple and private life the Shaiks lead in their camps, would be no difficult thing to effect. If he haraſſes his ſubjects by ſeverity, they abandon him, and go over to another tribe. His own relations take advantage of his miſconduct to depoſe him, and advance themſelves to his ſtation. His ſubjects communicate

municate too eaſily with each other to render it poſſible for him to divide their intereſts, and form a faction in his favour; nor can he have any reſource in foreign troops; for how is he to pay them, ſince he receives no kind of taxes from the tribe; the wealth of the greater part of his ſubjects being limited to abſolute neceſſaries, and his own confined to very moderate poſſeſſions, and thoſe too loaded with great expences?

The principal Shaik in every tribe, in fact, defrays the charges of all who arrive at or leave the camp. He receives the viſits of the allies, and of every perſon who has buſineſs with them. Adjoining to his tent is a large pavillion for the reception of all ſtrangers and paſſengers. There are held frequent aſſemblies of the Shaiks and principal men, to determine on encampments and removals, on peace and war; on the differences with the Turkiſh governors and the villages; and the litigations and quarrels of individuals. To this crowd, which enters ſucceſſively, he muſt give coffee, bread baked on the aſhes, rice, and ſometimes roaſted kid or camel; in a word, he muſt keep open table; and it is the more important to him to be generous, as this generoſity is cloſely connected with

matters of the greateſt conſequence. On the exerciſe of this depend his credit and his power. The famiſhed Arab ranks the liberality which feeds him before every virtue, nor is this prejudice without foundation; for experience has proved that covetous chiefs never were men of enlarged views: hence the proverb, as juſt as it is brief, *A cloſe fiſt, a narrow heart.* To provide for theſe expences, the Shaik has nothing but his herds, a few ſpots of cultivated ground, the profits of his plunder, and the tribute he levies on the high roads, the total of which is very inconſiderable. The Shaik, with whom I reſided in the country of Gaza, about the end of 1784, paſſed for one of the moſt powerful of thoſe diſtricts; yet it did not appear to me that his expenditure was greater than that of an opulent farmer. His perſonal effects, conſiſting in a few peliſſes, carpets, arms, horſes, and camels, could not be eſtimated at more than fifty thouſand livres (a little above two thouſand pounds); and it muſt be obſerved that in this calculation, four mares of the breed of racers, are valued at ſix thouſand livres (two hundred and fifty pounds), and each camel at ten pounds ſterling. We muſt not therefore, when we ſpeak

of

of the Bedouins, affix to the words *Prince* and *Lord*, the ideas they uſually convey; we ſhould come nearer the truth by comparing them to ſubſtantial farmers, in mountainous countries, whoſe ſimplicity they reſemble in their dreſs, as well as in their domeſtic life and manners. A Shaik, who has the command of five hundred horſe, does not diſdain to ſaddle and bridle his own, nor to give him his barley and chopped ſtraw. In his tent, his wife makes the coffee, kneeds the dough, and ſuperintends the dreſſing of the victuals. His daughters and kinſwomen waſh the linen, and go with pitchers on their head, and veils over their faces, to draw water from the fountain. Theſe manners agree preciſely with the deſcriptions in Homer, and the hiſtory of Abraham, in Geneſis. But it muſt be owned that it is difficult to form a juſt idea of them without having ourſelves been eye-witneſſes.

The ſimplicity, or, perhaps, more properly, the poverty, of the lower claſs of the Bedouins, is proportionate to that of their chiefs. All the wealth of a family conſiſts of moveables, of which the following is a pretty exact inventory. A few male and female camels, ſome goats and poultry; a mare, and her bridle and ſaddle; a tent, a lance ſixteen feet long, a

crooked ſabre, a ruſty muſket, with a flint, or matchlock; a pipe, a portable mill, a pot for cooking, a leathern bucket, a ſmall coffee roaſter, a mat, ſome clothes, a mantle of black woollen, and a few glaſs or ſilver rings, which the women wear upon their legs and arms; if none of theſe are wanting, their furniture is complete. But what the poor man ſtands moſt in need of, and what he takes moſt pleaſure in, is his mare; for this animal is his principal ſupport. With his mare the Bedouin makes his excurſions againſt hoſtile tribes, or ſeeks plunder in the country, and on the highways. The mare is preferred to the horſe, becauſe ſhe does not neigh (*), is more docile, and yields milk, which, on occaſion, ſatisfies the thirſt, and even the hunger of her maſter.

Thus confined to the moſt abſolute neceſſaries of life, the Arabs have as little induſtry as their wants are few; all their arts conſiſt in weaving their clumſy tents, and in making mats, and butter. Their whole commerce

(*) This ſtrange aſſertion may be found in other authors. M. Chenier, in his *Recherches Hiſtoriques ſur les Maures*, Vol. III. page 139, affirms mares do not neigh. Mares in Europe, however, certainly neigh, as every body knows, or may know.

only

only extends to the exchanging camels, kids, ſtallions, and milk; for arms, clothing, a little rice or corn, and money, which they bury. They are totally ignorant of all ſcience; and have not even any idea of aſtronomy, geometry, or medicine. They have not a ſingle book; and nothing is ſo uncommon, among the Shaiks, as to know how to read. All their literature conſiſts in reciting tales and hiſtories, in the manner of the Arabian Nights Entertainments. They have a peculiar paſſion for ſuch ſtories; and employ in them almoſt all their leiſure, of which they have a great deal. In the evening, they ſeat themſelves on the ground, at the door of their tents, or under cover, if it be cold, and there, ranged in a circle, round a little fire of dung, their pipes in their mouths, and their legs croſſed, they ſit a while in ſilent meditation, till, on a ſudden, one of them breaks forth with, *Once upon a time*— and continues to recite the adventures of ſome young Shaik, and female Bedouin: he relates in what manner the youth firſt got a ſecret glimpſe of his miſtreſs; and how he became deſperately enamoured of her; he minutely deſcribes the

lovely fair, extols her black eyes, as large and ſoft as thoſe of the gazelle; her languid and empaſſioned looks, her arched eye-brows, reſembling two bows of ebony: her waiſt ſtreight, and ſupple as a lance; he forgets not her ſteps, light as thoſe of the *young filley*, nor her eye-laſhes, blackened with *kohl*, nor her lips painted blue, nor her nails, tinged with the golden coloured *henna*, nor her breaſts, reſembling two pomegranates, nor her words, ſweet as honey. He recounts the ſufferings of the young lover, *ſo waſted with deſire and paſſion, that his body no longer yields any ſhadow.* At length, after detailing his various attempts to ſee his miſtreſs, the obſtacles on the part of the parents, the invaſions of the enemy, the captivity of the two lovers, &c. he terminates, to the ſatisfaction of the audience, by reſtoring them, united and happy, to the paternal tent, and by receiving the tribute paid to his eloquence, in the *Ma ſha allah* he has merited *(b)*. The Bedouins have likewiſe their love ſongs, which have more ſentiment and nature in them than

(b) An exclamation of praiſe, equivalent to *admirably well!*

thoſe

thoſe of the Turks, and inhabitants of the towns; doubtleſs, becauſe the former, whoſe manners are chaſte, know what love is; while the latter, abandoned to debauchery, are acquainted only with enjoyment.

When we conſider how much the condition of the Bedouins, eſpecially in the depths of the deſert, reſembles, in many reſpects, that of the ſavages of America, we ſhall be inclined to wonder why they have not the ſame ferocity; why, though they ſo often experience the extremity of hunger, the practice of devouring human fleſh was never heard of among them; and why, in ſhort, their manners are ſo much more ſociable and mild. The following obſervations appear to me to contain the true ſolution of this difficulty.

It ſeems, at firſt view, that America, being rich in paſturage, lakes, and foreſts, is more adapted to the paſtoral mode of life than to any other. But if we conſider, that theſe foreſts, by affording an eaſy refuge to animals, protect them more ſurely from the power of man, we may conclude, that the ſavage has been induced to become a hunter, inſtead of a ſhepherd, by the nature of the country.

country. In this ſtate, all his habits have concurred to give him a ferocity of character. The great fatigues of the chace have hardened his body; frequent and extreme hunger, followed by a ſudden abundance of game, has rendered him voracious. The habit of ſhedding blood, and tearing his prey, has familiarized him to the ſight of death and ſufferings. Tormented by hunger, he has deſired fleſh; and finding it eaſy to obtain that of his fellow creature, he could not long heſitate to kill him to ſatisfy the cravings of his appetite. The firſt experiment made, this cruelty degenerates into a habit; he becomes a cannibal, ſanguinary and atrocious; and his mind acquires all the inſenſibility of his body.

The ſituation of the Arab is very different. Amid his vaſt naked plains, without water, and without foreſts, he has not been able, for want of game, or fiſh, to become either a hunter or a fiſherman. The camel has determined him to a paſtoral life, the manners of which have influenced his whole character. Finding, at hand, a light, but conſtant and ſufficient nouriſhment, he has acquired the habit of frugality. Content

with

with his milk and his dates, he has not deſired fleſh; he has ſhed no blood: his hands are not accuſtomed to ſlaughter, nor his ears to the cries of ſuffering creatures, he has preſerved a humane and ſenſible heart.

No ſooner did the ſavage ſhepherd become acquainted with the uſe of the horſe, than his manner of life muſt conſiderably change. The facility of paſſing rapidly over extenſive tracts of country, rendered him a wanderer. He was greedy from want; and became a robber from greedineſs; and ſuch is, in fact, his preſent character. A plunderer, rather than a warrior, the Arab poſſeſſes no ſanguinary courage; he attacks only to deſpoil; and, if he meets with reſiſtance, never thinks a ſmall booty is to be put in competition with his life. To irritate him, you muſt ſhed his blood, in which caſe he is found to be as obſtinate in his vengeance as he was cautious in avoiding danger.

The Arabs have often been reproached with this ſpirit of rapine; but, without wiſhing to defend it, we may obſerve, that one circumſtance has not been ſufficiently attended to, which is, that it only takes place towards reputed enemies, and is conſequently

ly founded on the acknowledged laws of almoſt all nations. Among themſelves they are remarkable for a good faith, a diſintereſtedneſs, a generoſity which would do honour to the moſt civilized people. What is there more noble than that right of aſylum ſo reſpected among all the tribes? A ſtranger, nay, even an enemy, touches the tent of the Bedouin, and, from that inſtant, his perſon becomes inviolable. It would be reckoned a diſgraceful meanneſs, an indelible ſhame, to ſatisfy even a juſt vengeance at the expence of hoſpitality. Has the Bedouin conſented to eat bread and ſalt with his gueſt, nothing can induce him to betray him. The power of the Sultan himſelf would not be able to force a refugee *(i)* from the protection of a tribe, but by its total extermination. The Bedouin, ſo rapacious without his camp, has no ſooner ſet his foot within it, than he becomes liberal and generous. What little he poſſeſſes he is ever ready to divide. He has even the delicacy not to wait till it is

(i) The Arabs diſcriminate their gueſts, into gueſt *moſtadjir*, or *imploring protection*; and gueſt *matnoub*, *who ſets up his tent in a line with theirs*; that is, who becomes naturalized.

aſked:

aſked: when he takes his repaſt, he affects to ſeat himſelf at the door of his tent, in order to invite the paſſengers; his generoſity is ſo ſincere, that he does not look upon it as a merit, but merely as a duty: and he, therefore, readily takes the ſame liberty with others. To obſerve the manner in which the Arabs conduct themſelves towards each other, one would imagine that they poſſeſſed all their goods in common. Nevertheleſs, they are no ſtrangers to property; but it has none of that ſelfiſhneſs which the increaſe of the imaginary wants of luxury has given it among poliſhed nations. It may be alleged, that they owe this moderation to the impoſſibility of greatly multiplying their enjoyments; but, if it be acknowledged, that the virtues of the bulk of mankind are only to be aſcribed to the neceſſity of circumſtances, the Arabs, perhaps, are not for this leſs worthy our eſteem. They are fortunate, at leaſt, that this neceſſity ſhould have eſtabliſhed among them a ſtate of things, which has appeared to the wiſeſt legiſlators as the perfection of human policy: I mean, a kind of equality in the partition of property, and the variety

of

of conditions. Deprived of a multitude of enjoyments, which nature has laviſhed upon other countries, they are leſs expoſed to temptations which might corrupt and debaſe them. It is more difficult for their Shaiks to form a faction to enſlave and impoveriſh the body of the nation. Each individual, capable of ſupplying all his wants, is better able to preſerve his character, and independence; and private poverty becomes at once the foundation and bulwark of public liberty.

This liberty extends even to matters of religion. We obſerve a remarkable difference between the Arabs of the towns and thoſe of the deſert; ſince, while the former crouch under the double yoke of political and religious deſpotiſm, the latter live in a ſtate of perfect freedom from both: it is true that on the frontiers of the Turks, the Bedouins, from policy, preſerve the appearance of Mahometaniſm; but ſo relaxed is their obſervance of its ceremonies, and ſo little fervor has their devotion, that they are generally conſidered as infidels, who have neither law nor prophets. They even make no difficulty in ſaying that the religion of Mahomet was not

not made for them ; " for," add they, " how " ſhall we make ablutions who have no " water ? How can we beſtow alms, who " are not rich ? Why ſhould we faſt in the " Ramadan, ſince the whole year with us is one " continual faſt ? and what neceſſity is there " for us to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, " if God be preſent every where ?" In ſhort, every man acts and thinks as he pleaſes, and the moſt perfect toleration is eſtabliſhed among them. Nothing can better deſcribe, or be a more ſatisfactory proof of this than a dialogue which one day paſſed between myſelf and one of their Shaiks, named Ahmed, ſon of Bahir, chief of the tribe of Wahidia. " Why," ſaid this Shaik to me, " do you wiſh to return among the Franks ? " Since you have no averſion to our manners ; " ſince you know how to uſe the lance, " and manage a horſe like a Bedouin, ſtay " among us. We will give you peliſſes, a " tent, a virtuous and young Bedouin " girl, and a good blood mare. You ſhall " live in our houſe."—" But do you not " know," replied I, " that, born among the " Franks, I have been educated in their re- " ligion ? In what light will the Arabs view

an

" an infidel, or what will they think of an " apoſtate?"—" And do not you yourſelf " perceive," ſaid he, " that the Arabs live " without troubling themſelves either about " the Prophet, or the *Book* (the Koran)? " Every man with us follows the direction " of his conſcience. Men have a right to " judge of actions, but religion muſt be left " to God alone."—Another Shaik, converſing with me, one day, addreſſed me, by miſtake, in the cuſtomary formulary, " Liſten, " and pray for the Prophet." Inſtead of the uſual anſwer, *I have prayed*, I replied, with a ſmile, *I liſten*. He recollected his error, and ſmiled in his turn. A Turk of Jeruſalem, who was preſent, took the matter up more ſeriouſly: " O Shaik," ſaid he, " how " canſt thou addreſs the words of the true " believers to an infidel?" " The tongue is " *light*," replied the Shaik, " let but the " heart be *white* (pure); but you, who " know the cuſtoms of the Arabs, how " can you offend a ſtranger with whom " we have eaten bread and ſalt?"—Then, turning to me, " All thoſe tribes of Frank- " eſtan, of whom you told me that they " follow not the law of the Prophet,

" are

" are they more numerous than the muſſul-
" men?" " It is thought," anſwered I, " that
" they are five or ſix times more numerous,
" even including the Arabs."—" God is juſt,"
returned he, " he will weigh them in his
" balance *(k)*."

It

(k) M. Niebuhr relates in his *Deſcription de l'Arabie*, tome II. page 208, Paris edition, that, within the laſt thirty years, a new religion has ſprung up in the Najd, the principles of which are analogous to the diſpoſition of mind I have been deſcribing. " Theſe prin-
" ciples," ſays that traveller, " are, that God alone
" ſhould be invoked and adored, as the author of all
" things; that we ſhould make no mention of any
" prophet in praying, becauſe that too nearly re-
" ſembles idolatry: that Moſes, Jeſus Chriſt, Maho-
" met, &c. were in truth great men, whoſe actions
" are edifying; but that no book was ever inſpired by
" the angel Gabriel, or any other celeſtial ſpirit. In
" ſhort, that vows made in the time of imminent
" danger are neither meritorious nor obligatory. I
" do not know," adds M. Niebuhr, " how far we
" may truſt the veracity of the Bedouin who told
" me this. Perhaps it was his peculiar way of think-
" ing; for the Bedouins, though they call themſelves
" Mahometans, in general, care very little about either
" Mahomet or the Koran."

The authors of this new ſect were two Arabs, who, having travelled, in conſequence of ſome commercial affairs, into Perſia and Malabar, reaſoned on the di-

It muſt be owned, that there are few poliſhed nations whoſe morality is, in general, ſo much to be eſteemed as that of the Bedouin Arabs; and it is worthy of remark that the ſame virtues are equally to be found in the Turkman hordes, and the Curds. It is ſingular, alſo, that it ſhould be among theſe that religion is the freeſt from exterior forms, inſomuch that no man has ever ſeen, among the Bedouins, the Turkmans, or Curds, either prieſts, temples, or regular worſhip. But it is time to continue the deſcription of the other tribes of the inhabitants of Syria, and to direct our attention to a ſocial ſtate, very different from that we are now quitting, to the ſtate of a cultivating and ſedentary people.

verſity of religions they had ſeen, and thence deduced this general toleration. One of them, named Abd-el-Waheb, in 1760, erected an independent ſtate in the Najd; the other, called Mekrami, Shaik of Nadjeran, had adopted the ſame opinions; and, by his valour, raiſed himſelf to conſiderable power in thoſe countries. Theſe two examples render ſtill more probable a conjecture I have already mentioned, That nothing is more eaſy than to effect a grand political and religious revolution in Aſia.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.